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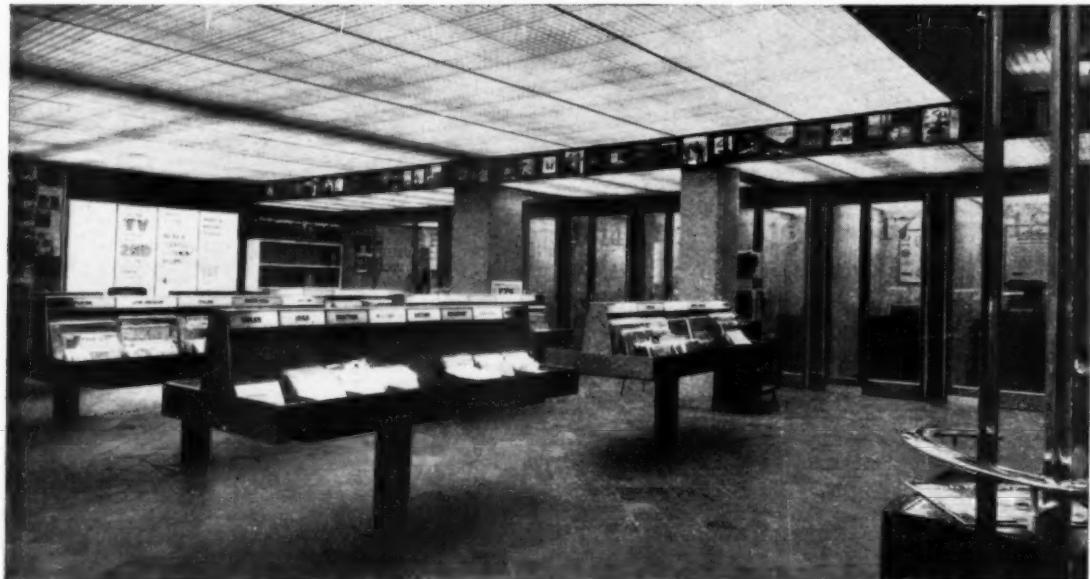
And, of course, for those who prefer classical music, there is the Classical Department on the Ground Floor, staffed by experts and again fitted with open counters where you can browse among the titles in their classified sections. Here, too, are pre-recorded tapes as well as London's finest stock of discs.

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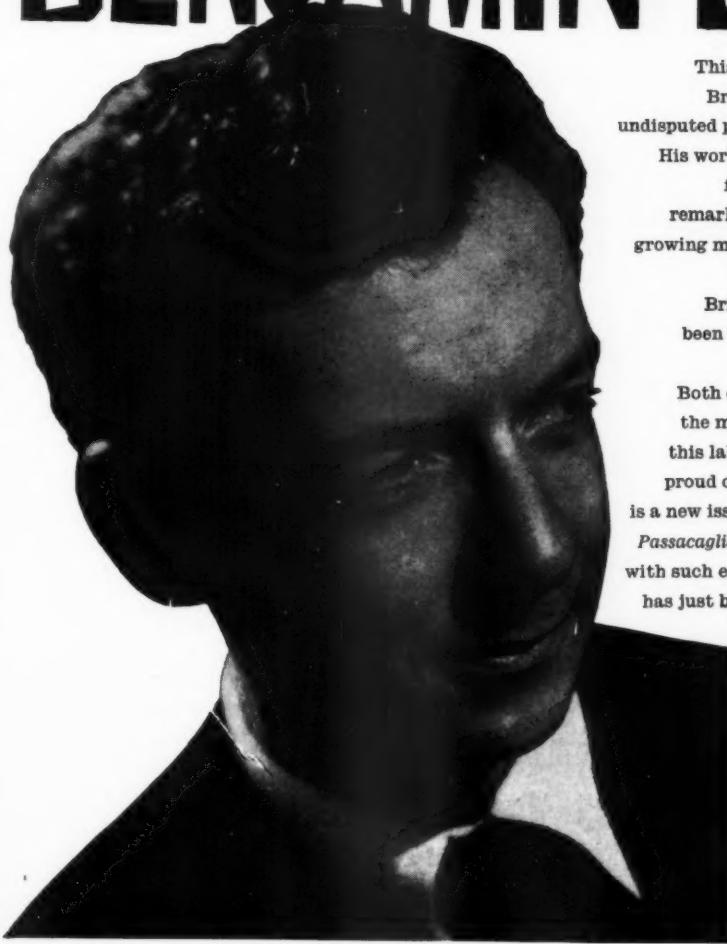
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BENJAMIN BRITTEN



This page is devoted to recordings of music by Benjamin

Britten who, from almost his earliest days, has held an undisputed position as one of this country's foremost composers.

His work has consistently displayed a sustained intensity of feeling and a melodic invention controlled by a quite remarkable technical facility, and these qualities, with his growing maturity, have won him a high reputation not only at home but also—and this is remarkable for a modern British composer—abroad. Much of Britten's music has been written with Peter Pears in mind, and he has proved

the supreme interpreter of these works and roles.

Both composer and tenor record exclusively for Decca and the majority of Britten's recorded music is to be found on this label, frequently conducted by himself. Decca is justly proud of this important list of fine recordings. The *Nocturne* is a new issue this month, and it is backed by the *Interludes* and *Passacaglia* from the complete *Peter Grimes* which was received with such enthusiastic acclaim towards the end of last year and has just been awarded the News Chronicle golden disc for 1959.



Nocturne Op. 60

Four sea Interludes and
Passacaglia

The Royal Opera House Orchestra
conducted by Benjamin Britten

• SXL 2189 M LXT 5564

The prince of the pagodas

The Royal Opera House Orchestra
conducted by Benjamin Britten

M LXT 5336/7

The turn of the screw

Peter Pears, Jennifer Vyvyan, etc.
with The English Opera Group ensemble
conducted by Benjamin Britten

M LXT 5038/9

Peter Grimes

Watson, Pears, Pease, Brannigan, etc.
The Royal Opera House
Chorus and Orchestra
conducted by Benjamin Britten

• SXL 2150/2 M LXT 5521/3

Serenade for tenor,

horn and strings, Op. 31 (a)

Les Illuminations, Op. 18

Peter Pears with
The New Symphony Orchestra of London
conducted by SIR EUGENE GOOSSENS
(a) with DENNIS BRAIN

M LXT 2941 (Book of words: 6d.)

Seven sonnets of Michelangelo

Winter words

Peter Pears with Benjamin Britten

M LXT 5095 (Book of words: 6d.)

Saint Nicolas, Op. 42

Peter Pears with The Aldeburgh
Festival Chorus and Orchestra
conducted by Benjamin Britten

M LXT 5060

A Boy was born, Op. 3

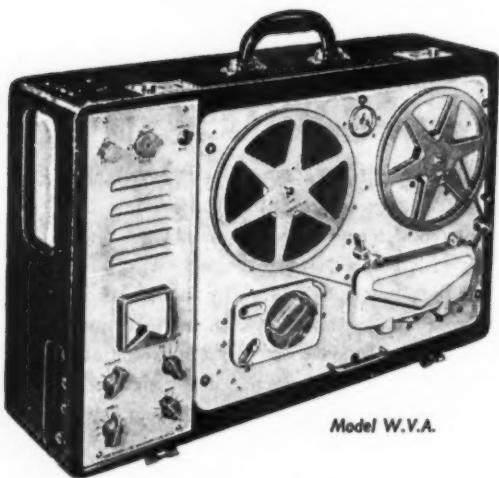
Rejoice in the Lamb, Op. 30
conducted by Benjamin Britten

M LXT 5416

DECCA

STEREO OR MONO RECORDS

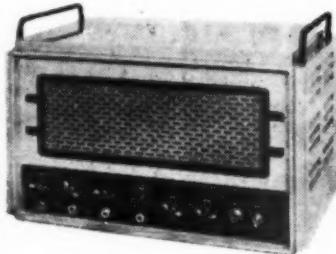
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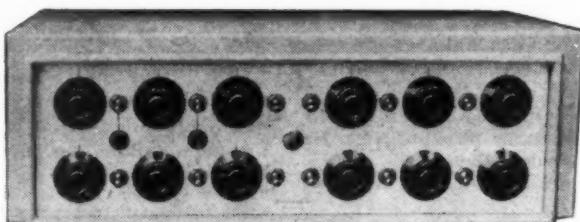
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with specially-designed JASON turret tuner

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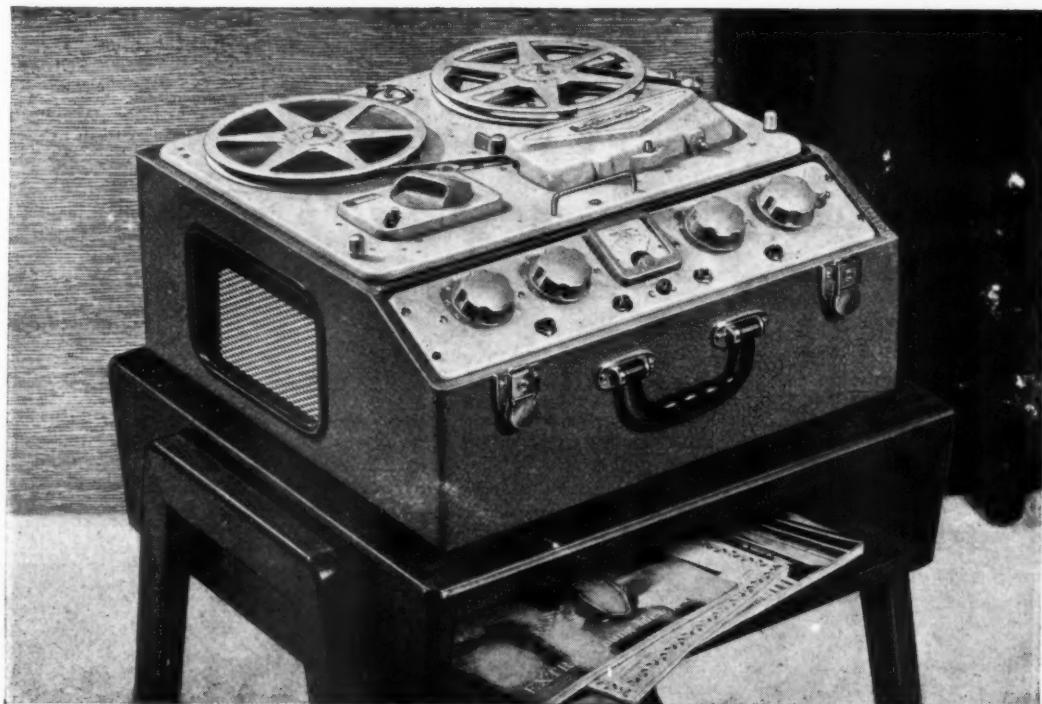
Mercury II assembled turret and two valves ...	£4.10.0
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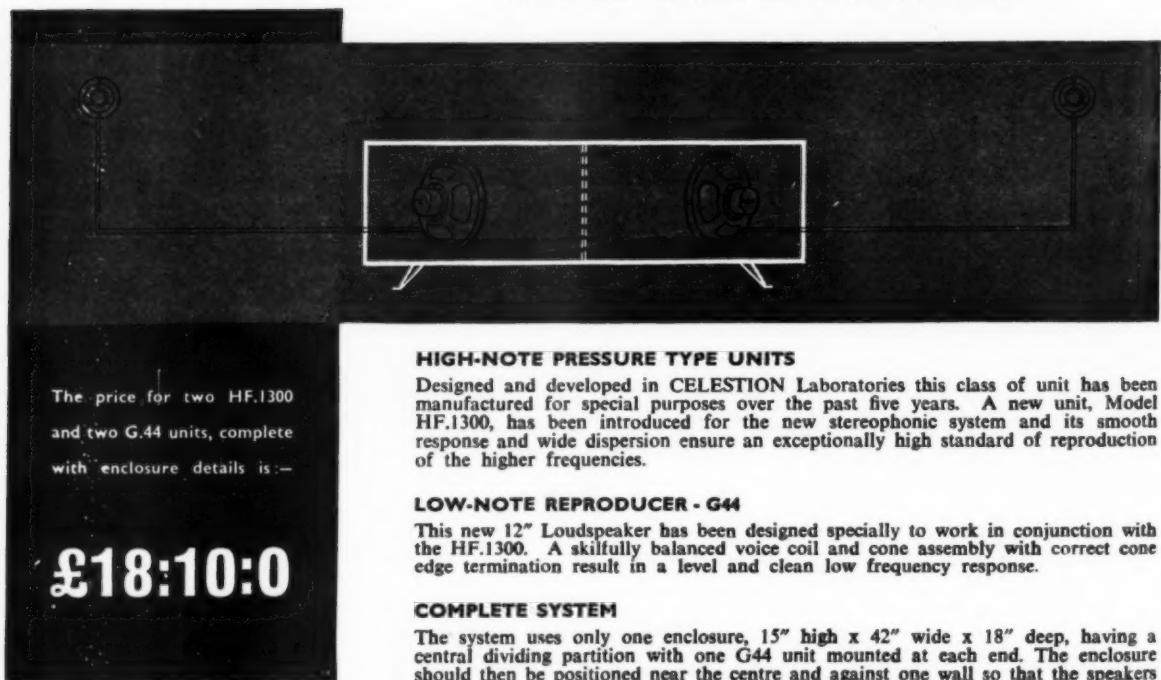
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MODEL G44/1300

FULL WIDTH STEREOPHONIC

LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM

The complete answer to the demand for a reasonably priced high-quality speaker system for the reproduction of stereophonic recordings in the home. Utilising two very small-pressure type direct radiator units for the higher frequencies and two 12" reproducers for the lower, the equipment covers a response which is substantially level from 35—15,000 c/s, with true stereophonic effect.



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Designed and developed by

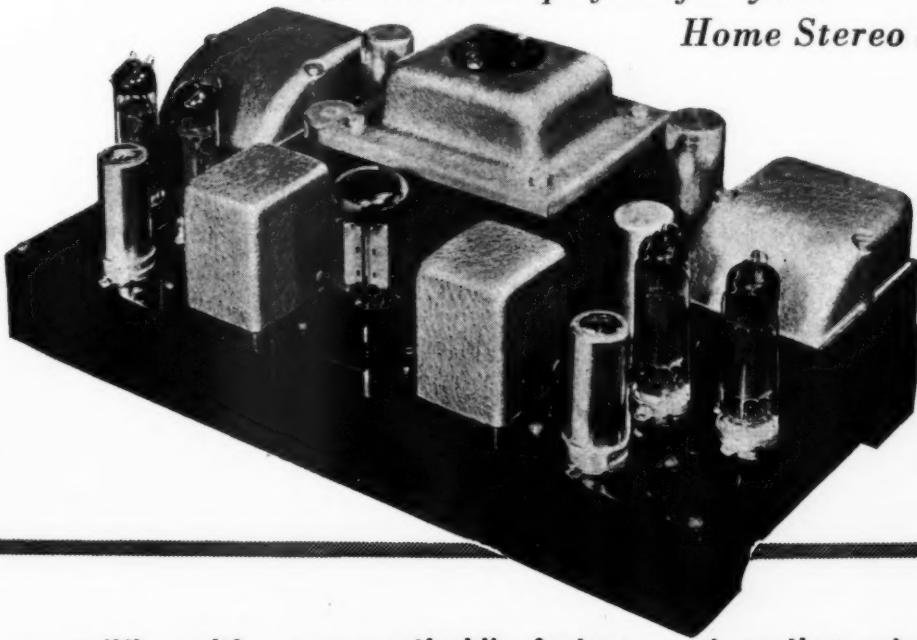
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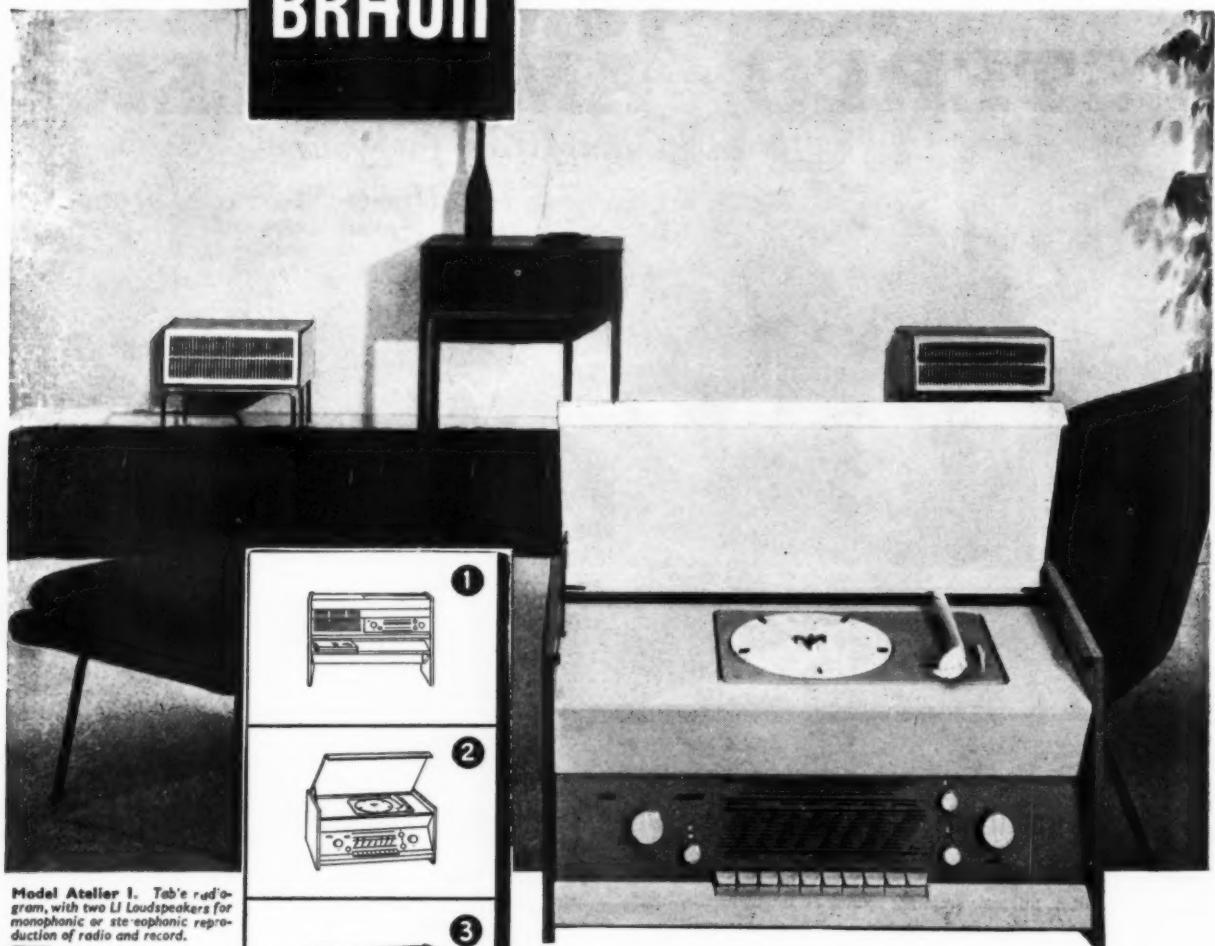
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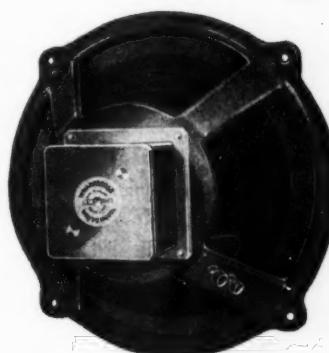
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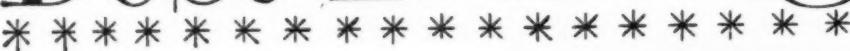
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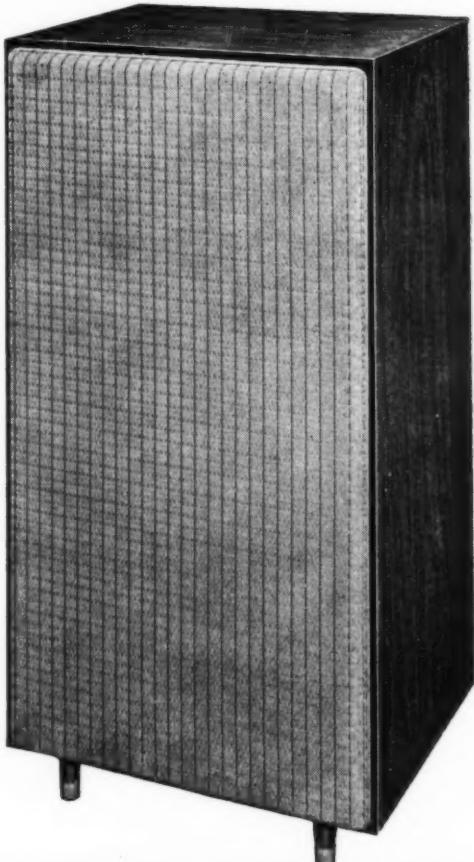
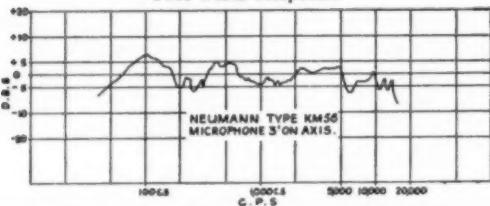


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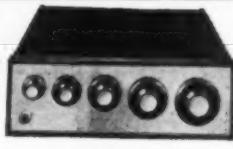
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PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, 18th MARCH

8.30 p.m. Film Programme: "Science in the Orchestra"; "The Instruments of the Orchestra"; "Fra Diavolo" with Laurel and Hardy.

SATURDAY, 19th MARCH

9.30 a.m.-1.00 p.m. "Curiouser and Curiouser", a record programme introduced by Donald Aldous; "The History of a Record Company", presented by John Ridley of Audio Fidelity; "The Art of Wilhelm Kempff", a record programme presented by Edward Greenfield of "The Guardian".

SUNDAY AFTERNOON at 2.45 p.m. Live Orchestral Concert with soloists and the Orchestra of the Royal Manchester College of Music, conducted by David Jordan: Overture The Mastersingers (Wagner); Arias from "The Magic Flute", "Marriage of Figaro", "Don Giovanni" (Mozart); Piano Concerto 3 (Beethoven); Symphony No. 4 in G (Dvorák). **SUNDAY EVENING** at 6 p.m. "The Spoken Word on Disc"—C. V. C. Clinton-Baddeley of Jupiter Recordings. 9 p.m. Arthur Haddy, the Chief Recording Engineer of Decca talks about FFRR and FFSS.

THE COST OF THE WEEK-END (including first class accommodation and really excellent food) is from as little as £6 to £7/10s. (according to length of stay).

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2.30 p.m.-7.00 p.m. Demonstrations by the major record companies and selected manufacturers of High Fidelity domestic stereo equipment. (These Saturday Afternoon Demonstrations are open to the General Public).

8.30 p.m. "Fra Diavolo" (Auber). A complete opera performance in costume. Sung in English.

11.00 p.m. Stereo Music for dancing. (Records played on the Decca).

SUNDAY, 20th MARCH

10.00 a.m. "A short history of music without music tears", presented with projections and recordings by Denis Stevens. 11.30 a.m. "QUORUM." A Technical discussion with Percy Wilson, Donald Aldous and Ralph West. (Questions welcomed).

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMME:

11.30 a.m. "The Music of Friends", a programme of records presented by Denis Stevens.

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STEREO RECORD GUIDE

THE STEREO RECORD GUIDE is a comprehensive review of all stereo records available in the field of classical music (with an additional section on light music), reviewed by three critics who have made a speciality of stereo from its inception.

Edited by Ivan March, the co-authors are Edward Greenfield of *The Guardian*, and Denis Stevens of *The Gramophone*. The foreword by Percy Wilson, technical editor of *The Gramophone*, traces the background and history of stereo.

Available in a handsomely bound first edition, with an attractively designed permanent dust jacket, the *Stereo Record Guide* @ 21/- is an essential purchase for any music lover or record collector.

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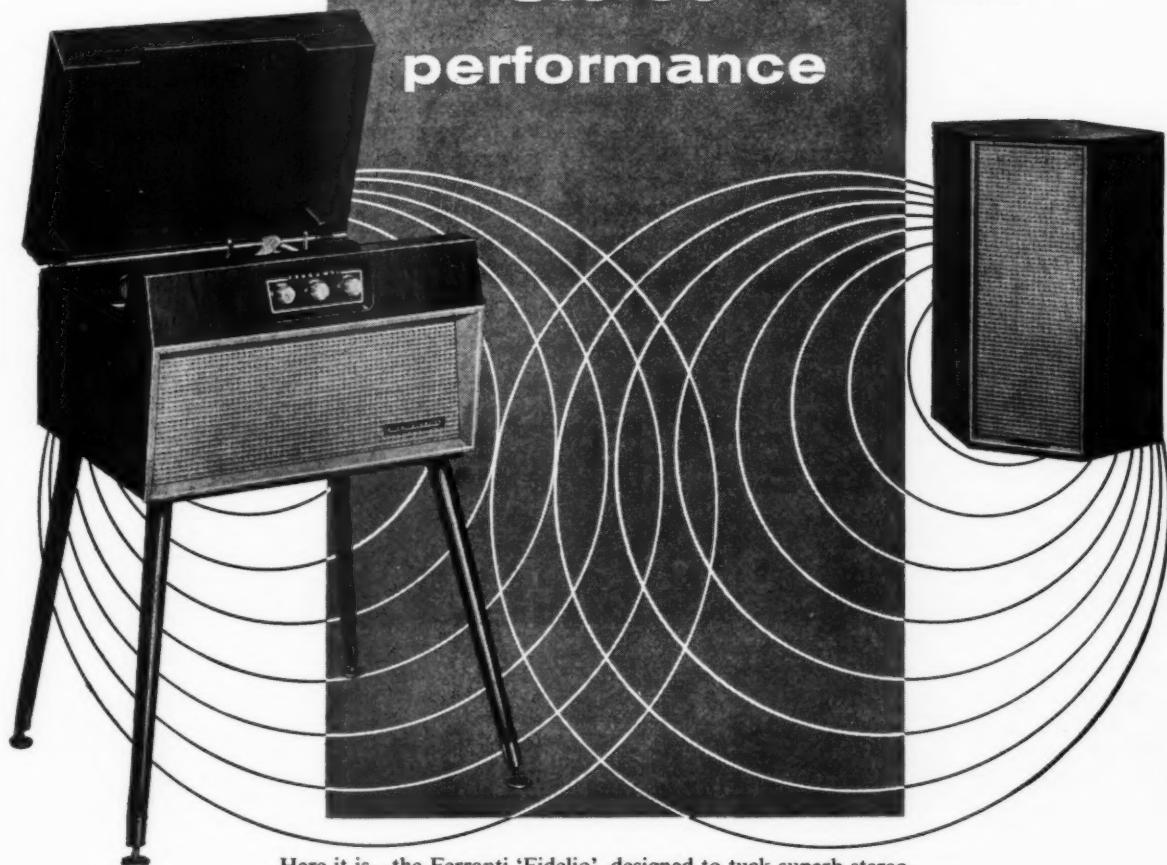
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12½" high (less legs) x 19½" wide x
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Twin channel pre-amplifier.
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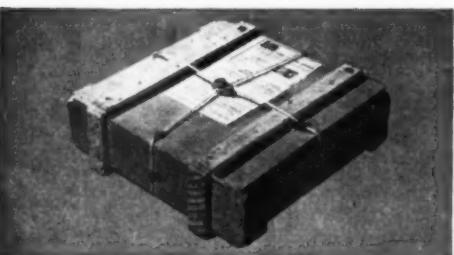
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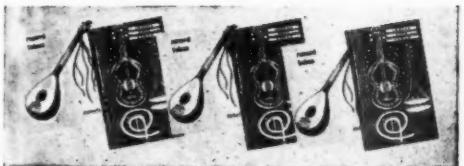
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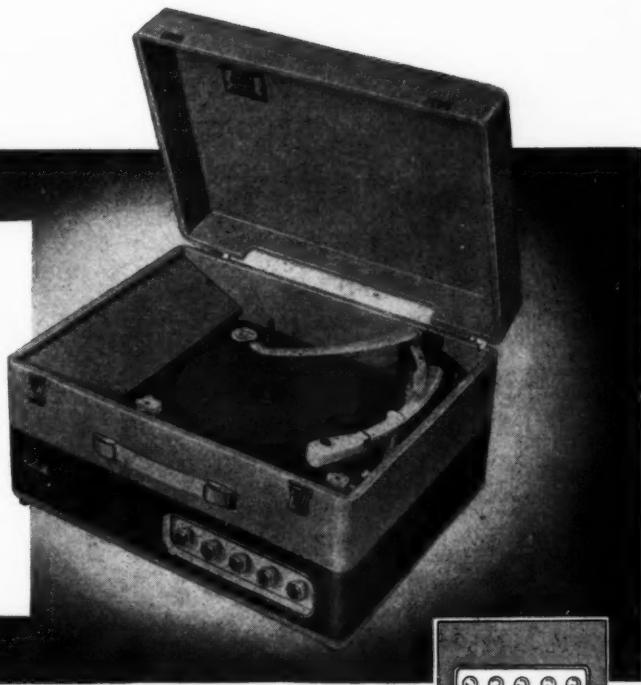
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EDWIN FISCHER

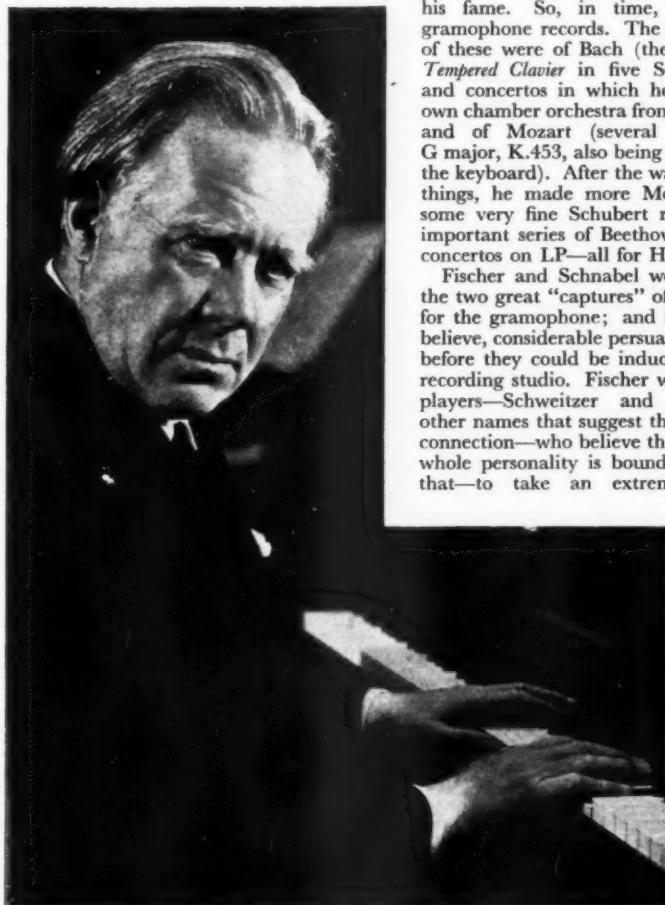
OCTOBER 6th, 1886 – JANUARY 24th, 1960

By ANDREW PORTER

EDWIN FISCHER was born in Basle, the son of an oboist in the municipal orchestra, who was also viola of a string quartet. In 1896 he entered the Basle Conservatory; in 1904 he was in Berlin as

a student, and the following year as a professor, at the Stern'sches Konservatorium. Around 1916 he began his international career. Recitals, appearances with great conductors, and concerts with his own chamber ensemble all established his fame. So, in time, did numerous gramophone records. The most important of these were of Bach (the complete *Well Tempered Clavier* in five Society volumes, and concertos in which he conducted his own chamber orchestra from the keyboard), and of Mozart (several concertos, the G major, K.453, also being conducted from the keyboard). After the war, among other things, he made more Mozart concertos, some very fine Schubert records, and an important series of Beethoven sonatas and concertos on LP—all for H.M.V.

Fischer and Schnabel were regarded as the two great "captures" of musical pianists for the gramophone; and in both cases, I believe, considerable persuasion was needed before they could be induced to enter the recording studio. Fischer was one of those players—Schweitzer and Menuhin are other names that suggest themselves in this connection—who believe that a performer's whole personality is bound up in his art: that—to take an extreme instance—a



Edwin
Fischer

[E.M.I. Photo]

woman who was hateful to her husband in real life could not sing *Fidelio* well. In his *Reflections on Music* Fischer wrote: "The most arduous study, the most genuine talent, the most serious application are not enough, if the whole of one's life is not turned in the direction of reflecting on great thoughts and on lofty emotions. Every action, and even every thought, has its effect on the personality. The purity of life should extend to the very mouthful that one lifts to one's lips".

One of the secrets of Fischer's greatness seemed to lie in a complete identification of his own personality with that of the composition he was playing. He could "express himself" completely, for in doing so he was expressing the work. A sentence in his recently published *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas* (Faber, 21s.) bears this out. He writes: "A careful study of these works will transform us, for Beethoven will become our teacher and lead us to develop our own personalities and characters". Later, after paying tribute to Schnabel's intellectual qualities, he opines that his colleague went too far in calculating his effects (counting out trills, pauses, even the rests between movements). Fischer requires the pianist to "surrender to the sway of his imagination".

His playing could be spontaneous, because he had identified himself with the work. However much he "surrendered" to the inspiration of the moment, the result would not be out of style. By modern standards his technique was not strong: yet his playing could be immensely grand in such a piece as Brahms's F minor Sonata. My strongest impressions of him remain from two performances of the *Waldstein* Sonata, in the Central Hall in 1951 and the Festival Hall two years later. And in his book mentioned above I find that he regarded the middle-period sonatas as "the consummation of Beethoven's art . . . later works reveal further developments and achieve greater heights in one or other respect—but as far as the perfect balance of all the requirements is concerned the works between Opp. 50 and 60 represent the summit".

Edwin Fischer's precepts are carried on by several distinguished pupils before the public today. And his records—several of them—remain available: both some of the pre-war sets reissued as Great Recordings of the Century, and modern ones.

COLLECTORS' CORNER

By JOHN FREESTONE

WHEN "Collectors' Corner" last appeared in these pages, nearly six years ago, the establishment of the long-playing record had caused a decided lessening of interest in "historical" records. It is now quite clear that this was only temporary, and the considerable number of reissues of recordings by great singers of the past, which have appeared on the English market in the last two years or so, has completely changed the position.

It is apparent that originals of all but the great rarities have dropped in value, at least temporarily. This is due to two factors. In the first place many young collectors cannot afford elaborate equipment and have had to be content with instruments which will give tolerable results on modern recordings. Such an instrument will almost invariably sound atrocious when coping with early 78s, and so the young collector will naturally turn to re-recordings on long playing or extended play discs, which will reproduce quite well if the process of transferring the originals has been successfully carried out. And here let it be admitted that unless a collector is willing to go to considerable trouble and expense in obtaining first-rate equipment for playing old records, he will obtain far better results from modern transfers which have been copied under expert supervision.

Secondly, the general availability, even in the form of re-recordings, of records which were once difficult to obtain, has obviously affected the value of the original discs. I believe that this lessening of value is only temporary, for the serious collector will eventually wish to hear his favourite recordings at first hand, and not in the second hand form in which most are now available, but there is a very real possibility that in say twenty years' time it will be as difficult to play 78s as it is to deal adequately with cylinder records today.

At the moment nearly all motors include the old speed, some with a slight degree of regulation possible, but for most purposes 78 r.p.m. has already become redundant, and now that the "standard" speed records are almost obsolete, it cannot be long before most motors will only include the slower speeds. Then again I know of only one pick-up which is still made for miniature thorns—the Expert Moving Coil—and even the manufacture of thorns may soon cease. This would be a misfortune for collectors of original recordings, for no sapphire or diamond point will be suitable for all old records, which vary considerably in groove width. In the case of a thorn, it will soon bed down, but a jewel point is not so adaptable.

Many of the reissues referred to have been highly successful, and particular bargains are the R.C.A. Camden series, which, while they have not included any items likely to appeal to the collector of early rarities, have given us some superb examples of the great artists of the 30s. The early electrics by Martinelli, Ponselle

and De Luca should be in all collections of great singing, and the slightly later Lieder recordings of Lotte Lehmann are equally superb in their way. This series might well be extended to include the many fine operatic examples by Pinza, Flagstad, and Rethberg, to mention only three artists who recorded quite extensively just before the second world war.

Of the smaller companies, Olympus and Belcantodisc have given us some very interesting material, and if Belcantodisc have been the more adventurous in their choice of artistes, Olympus have scored with their first-class engineering and their important "documentary" reissues of recordings by Melba, Zenatello, Tetrazzini and Tamagno.

The fine discs issued in America by the Scala Company should be mentioned. They, too, have really first-class engineering, and are far superior in this respect to the T.A.P. records which have appeared over here, although the latter certainly give exceptionally good value for money in respect of the number of selections included in each LP. The Rococo discs are issued by a company which was a pioneer in Historical reissues, and the quality of their latest discs leaves nothing to be desired. I would particularly recommend the Siems reissue, and also the earlier ones of Calvè and Plançon, which include many of the 1902 London recordings by these two great singers.

Perhaps I may be forgiven if I say something of my own collecting activities during the past six years. I have managed to complete several important sets, including all published recordings of Caruso, all the originals of Patti, and everything included in the 1904-5-6 releases by Melba. I still need Calvè's 1902 *Magali*, and three of the 1911 London recordings of Tetrazzini continue to elude me.

However, probably the most interesting acquisition is a large test record, without any label, but obviously of Melba, singing a part of *Sweet Bird*. This record is almost certainly of 1904 vintage, and starts earlier than the published one, and does indeed contain a passage which Melba never subsequently recorded. The reason for non-publication is obvious in this case! Melba makes an error, the music comes to an abrupt and rather embarrassed halt, and then she is heard to say something like this, "I'm sorry to be such a fool, we shall have to begin all over again". The first words are indistinct, but the latter ones are perfectly clear! How this test pressing survived is a mystery, but apart from the amusing and personal touch at the end, Melba's singing is glorious!

Some interesting Russian records have recently been imported into this country, and the Rossini excerpts sung by Dolukhanova are quite outstanding, particularly the duet from *Semiramide* with Sakharova, which contains singing worthy to place beside the "Mira o Norma"

of Ponselle and Telva. These discs are occasionally obtainable from Collett's record shops and other specialist dealers, and in addition there are some electric recordings by Neshdanova made in the mid-thirties, which show that she was still in good voice at this late date.

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ANALYTICAL NOTES AND FIRST REVIEWS

By

DERYCK COOKE • ROGER FISKE • TREVOR HARVEY • PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE
MALCOLM MACDONALD • WILLIAM S. MANN • JEREMY NOBLE • ANDREW PORTER
ALEC ROBERTSON • LIONEL SALTER • DENIS STEVENS • ROGER WIMBUSH



★ indicates a stereophonic recording

ORCHESTRAL

BACH. (a) *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3*
in G major, *BWV1048*.

BRAHMS. (b) *Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53*.

(c) *Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a.* (a) *Ansbach Bachwoche*, (b) *Elisabeth Höngen* (contralto), *Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra* and (c) *Württemberg State Orchestra*, all conducted by **Ferdinand Leitner**. D.G.G. Heliodore Mono LPX29256 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

Bach's Third Brandenburg Concerto has been reissued from DG16126 as a filler for this record mainly given up to the music of Brahms. Leitner is not much of a Bach

conductor; he does not care for the use of a continuo instrument, and prefers to play the two linking chords as if they constituted a separate movement in their own right. Some of the solo breaks are very poorly played.

I hoped that there might be something of a redeeming nature in the Brahms items, but these, too, contain disappointing features. Elisabeth Höngen is not up to the high standard required for a really thrilling performance of the *Alto Rhapsody*, and she is not helped very much by the lackadaisical Leitner. He cannot get real *sforzando* and *diminuendo* from 'cellos, basses, and bassoons at the very beginning, and the atmosphere of mysterious gloom suggested by Goethe's text is never properly echoed by the performers. The viola triplets at letter A are marked *forte staccato*, and when played that way strike the heart with chill terror. They play almost *legato* for Leitner, so that the effect goes for almost nothing. Höngen's first entry, the vitally important "Aber absieht wer ist's?" is flat in pitch and utterly lacking in dramatic feeling. When 'cellos and basses move down from G to F sharp the soloist's upward leap of a fourth ("die Ode") is noticeably late, and shortly afterwards in the 6/4 section she sings of "Gift"

("poison") as if it were lemonade. There is no tension, either dynamic or harmonic. The latter part, though better, is marred by a muzzy-sounding chorus, and the final impression is that both conductor and soloist are unsatisfactory.

The *Variations on a Theme of Haydn* get off to an unbelievably slow start. Brahms's genial *Andante* in 2/4 time becomes a pompous and gloomy movement in 4/4, and it isn't until Variation 2 that things begin to move, even then rather reluctantly. Variation 3 is marked *con moto*, but the tempo is hardly faster than the opening crawl of the chorale, and at the end the atmosphere is lost in a gauche tape-cut which also percusses the oboe-horn-viola entry of Variation 4. There is another bad tape-join between Variations 6 and 7. As in the *Alto Rhapsody*, things improve as time goes on, but not until it is really too late to save the situation. All in all, this is a regrettable issue.

D.S.

BACH. Violin Concertos. BWV1041 in

A minor: BWV1042 in E major. **Reinhold Barchet** (violin). Concerto in D minor for two violins, BWV1043. **Reinhold Barchet** and **Guido van der Mueren** (violins), **Südwestdeutsche Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Friedrich Tilegant**. Qualiton Mono BLP11462 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.).

BACH. Violin Concertos. BWV1041 in A minor: BWV1042 in E major. **Yehudi Menuhin** (violin), **Robert Masters Chamber Orchestra** directed by **Yehudi Menuhin**. Concerto in D minor for two violins, BWV1043. **Yehudi Menuhin** and **Christian Ferras** (violins), **Festival Chamber Orchestra** directed by **Yehudi Menuhin**. H.M.V. Mono ALP1760 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Four years ago exactly Vox issued a record of these same three Bach Concertos (PL9150) played, I suspect, by much the same artists who are on the Qualiton disc. Barchet was the main soloist, joined in the Double Concerto by Will Beh (and not, as on this disc, by Guido van der Mueren), and the accompanying band was the Pro Musica String Orchestra of Stuttgart, who are surely on nodding terms at least with the **Südwestdeutsche Chamber Orchestra**. The new disc seems to me an improvement on its predecessor, at least as regards the A minor solo concerto. Here the balance is good, the orchestra makes a real contribution and the harpsichord is audible. In the finale the tempo is much faster and the effect altogether more lively. Barchet seems more at home in the work than before. The other solo concerto also goes well, though I would venture one or two small musicological grousers. There is not enough harpsichord; in particular, the harpsichord is replaced by bogus string parts in bars 17 to 32 of the finale, whereas in the Vox recording this passage is rightly accompanied by continuo only. Also I long to hear someone extemporise a brief flourish at bar 22 of the slow movement, which is nonsensical without.

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Also Barchet starts his trills "on the note" instead of on the note above. The Double Concerto is somewhat marred by the balance, which brings in Barchet an easy first, his fellow soloist a length behind and the orchestra scarcely in the picture at all. Again the harpsichord is much too little in evidence. These faults are specially noticeable in the slow movement, and I would have liked a more solid bass in all three. But the playing has plenty of vigour and, in the slow movement, lyricism, and the whole disc has much to commend it.

The Menuhin disc of the same three works was recorded in this country just after his visit to the Bath Festival, when he directed performances of all the Brandenburg Concertos. Menuhin both plays and directs on this record too, and though his broadcasts of the Brandenburgs were faulty as to ensemble, there is nothing wrong with the ensemble in these performances. There is much to be said for trying to play these concertos in this way. For one thing, it is how people played them in Bach's day, and for another it imposes a chamber music flavour on them which is what they need. There is only one difficulty. A brilliant musician such as Menuhin may be able to achieve good ensemble without endangering his own performance, but even he cannot give the orchestra the sort of encouragement it needs while he is himself playing. For instance, at bar 30 of the first movement of the Double Concerto violins and violas have an entry in unison marked by Bach *forte* (dynamic marks in his music are uncommon), but unless a conductor brings them in with some display of energy the result will be tame. It is tame in this performance, and certainly not *forte*. But these small and very infrequent deficiencies are a small price to pay for such splendid performances as these are. One listens to the Barchet record with admiration for his competence. One listens to the Menuhin and thinks what wonderful music Bach wrote. I sometimes find his slow movements a bit on the dull side, but played by Menuhin they get right inside you. He is much more expressive than Barchet, much more given to lingering on a note, and able by sheer personality and musicianship to make the more emotive phrases an occasion, something quite out of the common run in modern music-making. In the Double Concerto he is splendidly supported by Christian Ferras, and the whole concerto is full of life in the outside movements and gloriously lyrical in the middle one. Balance and quality, too, are of the highest quality. In the two solo concertos I would have liked a more solid bass. 'Cellos and basses seemed a little far from the microphone, but here again I think a conductor would have got more spirited playing from them in such passages as the beginning of the slow movement of the A minor. After all, they have the tune here, but in this performance you would think the violin chords above more important. Menuhin's own playing in this slow movement is again supremely beautiful and the finale is very invigorating. Perhaps first beats are bumped a little too much in the opening movement, in which, too, I would have liked more orchestra here and

there. The E major concerto is not quite so successful; in places it sounds the least bit care-worn. But it is pretty good for all that, and Menuhin is better than Barchet at submerging himself into the rôle of accompanist at such points as bars 57 and 82 onwards in the first movement. Also he has no bogus string parts, and he begins all his trills delightfully on the upper note. Barchet perhaps gets the feel of the finale better, and in the first movement of the A minor his orchestra is less diffident as indeed are his bass strings in the second. But if you hope to be moved by this splendid music, you will want the Menuhin. R.F.

★**BARTOK.** *Piano Concertos*: Nos. 2 and 3. György Sándor (piano), Vienna Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Michael Gielen. Vox Stereo STPL511490 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Concerto No. 3, Mono:
Katchen, Suisse, Ansermet (3/54) LXT2894
Haas, Berlin R.I.A.S., Fricsay (6/56) DGM18223
Fischer, L.S.O., Markevitch (6/58) ALPI588

It was an enterprising idea on someone's part, when planning an issue of Bartók's much-recorded Third Piano Concerto, to couple it with the Second, which is still hardly known, and of which a recording was badly needed. This work has for long been regarded as of the most fearsomely modernistic kind, hard on the ears and almost beyond comprehension; but as the years go by, and we hear more Schoenberg, Webern and late Stravinsky (not to mention Boulez and Stockhausen), Bartók's most "experimental" compositions begin to sound as acceptable (and as delightful) as Falla and Ravel, if more violent. Anyone who likes No. 3 would be well advised to get to know No. 2, which is perhaps the finer work—certainly the more piquant in harmony, the more fascinating as sound, and the more rhythmically electrifying.

Unfortunately, I am afraid that this disc is of little assistance. The recording of No. 3 is not very good (poor quality of sound and everything too near the microphone), but that of No. 2 is really hopeless: a too-reverberant acoustic makes a mush of the whole texture, and a dim-sounding piano is often swamped by the orchestra. In consequence, it is difficult to form any opinion of Sándor's handling of this very difficult work, but it sounds as if a tremendously exciting performance has been wasted on the desert air. In No. 3, one can hear that he is far from being the best available. His tempo for the first movement (marked *Allegretto*) is impossibly fast, making it beyond his power to articulate the quick figurations clearly, and he is heavy-handed in the *grazioso* passages (or is it the too-near recording?). His rather matter-of-fact slow movement includes two chords different from those in the score at bars 28 and 35, either by accident or design; only his finale is of a really high standard.

To anyone wanting a good record of No. 3, I would suggest Annie Fischer's brilliant and most sensitive performance, which is well recorded; L.S. had doubts about her rubato, which is indeed very

heavy in the first movement, though I personally feel it suits the music perfectly. Monique Haas, whom L.S. preferred, gives an excellent orthodox performance, not quite as clearly recorded, though well enough (the second movement's "night music" comes off better, in fact). Some may like the virile interpretation of Julius Katchen—if they can take his unexciting finale, which is much less than *allegro vivace*. D.C.

★**BEETHOVEN.** *Symphonies*. No. 1 in C major, Op. 21: No. 4 in B flat major, Op. 60. *Paris Conservatoire Orchestra* conducted by Carl Schuricht. H.M.V. Mono XLP20016 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 6d. P.T.).

At their best these performances are brisk and efficient, at their worst brusque and perfunctory. Schuricht's no-nonsense approach to the music is welcome in some ways, for it avoids the lingering Wagnerian solemnity that some conductors inflict on the slow introductions to each of these symphonies; nor are the slow movements themselves ever allowed to bog down. This is to the good, of course, yet Schuricht's efficiency does seem to go in hand with a certain insensitivity to detail. For example he rarely manages to get his strings to reduce to a real *pianissimo* when Beethoven demands one suddenly, and he also fails to shape the lyrical phrases, in which these two symphonies in particular abound, with the loving care that the greatest conductors bring to them. He clearly does not feel about the sublime slow movement of No. 4 as Berlioz did when he wrote "Such must be the song of the archangel Michael as he contemplates the worlds uprising to the threshold of the empyrean"—in fact the music remains pretty much earthbound.

And yet in spite of all this I must say that this record represents good value for money, as long as you are not out for the very best. The recording may be a little on the shallow side, but it is perfectly clear. Moreover, by eschewing scrolls H.M.V. have been able to get both symphonies on to a single disc, including the repeat of the first movement's exposition in each of them. For anyone who regrets, as I do, the practice of omitting these repeats, this is quite a point in the record's favour. J.N.

★**BEETHOVEN.** *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67*. *Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra* conducted by Jan Krenz.

BACH. *Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV565* (arr. Smetacek). *Polish National Philharmonic Orchestra* conducted by Bohdan Wodiczko. D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 478034 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

Jan Krenz gives a powerful performance, finely achieved, but unduly heavy in places. The first movement is full of fire, but the quieter passages are spoiled by heavy string playing—a fault which continues into the rather broad *Andante*. The main tempo of the finale seems excessively slow for an *allegro*, and necessitates a sudden quickening for the return of the *Scherzo*, which robs

it of its emotional impact. The real blots on the performance, however, are two quite incomprehensible idiosyncrasies: in the *Andante*, the little grace-notes on the oboe, after the bassoon solo, are played on the beat, and as even demisemiquavers, an interpretation which seems to have no justification at all; and in the *Scherzo*, the *rallentando* at the end of the first phrase, each time it occurs, is drawn out so as to suggest a different rhythm from that notated by Beethoven, involving an extra bar. Faced with such quirks, one can only sigh and say "Why?" The fill-up, a rather extraordinary choice, is marred by the usual fault in this work—exaggerated chopping and changing of the tempo from phrase to phrase in the *Toccata*. The music has been recorded at a low dynamic level; on turning up the volume control considerably, one discovers a rather bass-heavy recording, which veils the quieter music and prevents the climaxes from blazing as they should. The disc may be an economical buy, but for an extra 8s. 6d. you can have the highly-praised Klemperer (Columbia 33C1051). D.C.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68, "Pastoral". Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. R.C.A. Mono RB16181: ★Stereo SB2065 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Stereo:
Philharmonia, Klemperer (10/58) SAX2260
V.S.O., Dorati (10/58) SCFL104

This is a more orthodox version of the *Pastoral* than Klemperer's, but I find myself at a loss to know whether to recommend it more or less highly. Monteux gives us a wonderfully brilliant "Peasants' Merrymaking", for example, quite without the sub-Breughel connotations that Klemperer chose to read into it. On the other hand I have to admit that his reading of the "Scene by the Brook" and perhaps even of the final "Hymn of Thanksgiving" is phrased with less majestic breadth. Is this perhaps because Klemperer has had more opportunity to get to know the Philharmonia Orchestra (and vice versa) than Monteux has with the Vienna Philharmonic? I can't quite rid myself of the feeling that there are corners in this performance that would have been turned a shade more convincingly if they could have had a couple more rehearsals together, but against this I have to admit that much of the playing is astonishingly delicate and precise, and that the exposition of the first movement (to take the first example that comes to hand) is shaped with absolute sureness. On the whole I should be inclined to recommend this stereo version to anyone who did not know the work well enough to recognise Klemperer's occasional eccentricities for what they are. As to the monophonic version, I have not had an opportunity to compare it with its seventeen competitors, but on the strength of both performance and recording I should think it would rate very highly among them. The mono version is a little heavy in the bass register, but there is a good spread to the tone. Just occasionally the woodwind

seem a little more backward than one might expect, notably in the second movement, but all in all this is a very good version of a standard classic. J.N.

BEETHOVEN. (a) Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92.

MOZART. (b) Five Contredances, K.609. (a) Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Witold Rowicki, (b) Polish State Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Stanislaw Wislocki. D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 479014 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

This disc is an unequivocal case of value for money. Rarely does the hard-worked Beethoven reviewer come across a performance of the Seventh Symphony which is a thrilling compensation for the many unimpressive ones, but here is an example at last. There are four outstanding versions to date, by Kleiber, Toscanini, Walter and Klemperer, but Witold Rowicki can certainly compete with these great conductors. He shows a comprehensive grasp of overall structure, an insight into the meaning of each detail, a weight and drive a superabundant vitality and a power of getting exactly what he wants from his splendid orchestra, that puts his performance in the highest class.

The tempo of each movement, beautifully chosen to accommodate both dynamic and lyrical elements, is adhered to firmly throughout, and, most important, it is kept moving with a persistent forward impulse that nevertheless gives the players time to phrase every note. In the first and last movements this culminates in a peroration which is thrilling not only in itself, but because it has been so inexorably approached as a peak from the very beginning, and in the *Scherzo* there is a whirling abandon, a way of sweeping forward impetuously, that I can't remember hearing before. The *Allegretto* is taken *andante* (as Beethoven is reported to have said he should have marked it)—very steadily and sombrely indeed, but without any suspicion of plodding—and again the build-up is superbly handled. This is achieved by a procedure which may serve as one example among many of Rowicki's sense of significant detail. When the counter-subject enters on second violins and violas, he does not bring it to the fore immediately, as is traditional, but follows Beethoven's marking—the same dynamic for everybody; in consequence it remains embedded in the texture all through the long crescendo until at last it emerges climactically on the first violins when the music reaches *fortissimo*. The effect is overwhelming—and right. This is the way I have always wanted to hear the symphony performed, and I have only two reservations: the relaxed treatment of the *Trio* seems at odds with the tension of the *Scherzo*, and the tempo of the finale is just that fraction too deliberate to allow the music to leave the ground entirely (contrast Toscanini and Walter).

The recording is admirably round in tone and full in the *tutti* passages, with a balance

that faithfully reproduces Beethoven's slight miscalculation of scoring; that is to say, the woodwind, at the back, cannot compete on equal terms with the strings as Beethoven imagined. This is being rather too honest, I feel; one often grumbles at exaggerated spotlighting of the woodwind in Beethoven, but in this case they could have been brought forward a little with advantage. To get the best sound, one has to boost the volume quite a bit, as the dynamic level is rather low. The Mozart fill-up—charming music most charmingly played—unfortunately sounds as though it were being relayed through an echo chamber. D.C.

BEETHOVEN. Piano Concertos. No. 1 in C major, Op. 15: No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 19. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano), Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. Decca Mono LXT552: ★Stereo SXL2178 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.). Concerto No. 1 previously available in Mono only on BR3001 (11/59).

Concerto No. 1, Stereo:
Rubinstein, Symphony of the Air, Krips (12/50) SB2046
Solomon, Philh., Menges (12/50) ASD294

This is an excellent disc, and a bargain too—if you like Beethoven's first two piano concertos. I must confess that if someone were to give me a blank cheque to buy gramophone records, they would come miles down on my list, considering all the other marvellous works there are available; but I suppose the out-and-out Beethoven fan, who has by now got the third, fourth and fifth piano concertos, will be wanting Nos. 1 and 2 before he thinks of sampling from the long list of Mozart concertos—say K.503 in C or K.595 in B flat.

Backhaus gives characteristically vital, strong, classical performances, at which no one can cavil. I personally find him a little heavy and humourless, a little brusque—he seems not very much concerned with beauty of tone or affectionate phrasing. He brings a lot more force to bear on the C major (actually No. 2 in order of composition, in case anyone doesn't know by now), which for me takes it out of the realm of early Beethoven into the middle period; on the other hand, he takes the *Largo* rather quickly, which removes much of the deep feeling from the music. The B flat is handled more gently, with an almost Mozartian lightness in places, but still, there is a lack of charm—which, someone will no doubt retort, would be out of place in any work by Beethoven. I must say that I prefer Rubinstein's smoother playing in the C major, and certainly Solomon's light, crisp, witty, charming performance, with its heavenly *Largo* (what a wonderful touch compared with Backhaus!) and a most sensitive account of the late E minor sonata thrown in. Still, here are the first two concertos on one disc, excellently recorded (Gilels' mono coupling of the two concertos on Columbia 33CX1667 will hardly be in the same street, to judge from W.S.M.'s recent review); you won't have cause to grumble. D.C.

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BEETHOVEN. *Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat major, Op. 73, "Emperor".* Eugene Istomin (piano), Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips Mono GBL5516 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.).

This is not one of the three or four outstanding *Emperor* records on the market, but I do believe it to be the most successful of the three within its price range: it sounds better than the Serkin (which is half-a-crown cheaper, and a fine reading, but eludes my tone controls altogether—I can't make it sound real), and it's a better organized rendering than the Gimpel (same price) which ultimately doesn't hang together because the pace alters so much.

Istomin's is a young man's *Emperor*, exultant and exuberant, well aware of its own glamorous prowess. It reminds me a little of the style of Mindru Katz's version, but is rather more exaggerated in emphasis than that (first movement, main theme derivative with triplet left-hand descending scale figure; second movement, double thirds passage in D major). Ormandy seconds Istomin in the breezy, high-powered view, and together they communicate the eternal freshness, if not the ultimate poetry of the work. The piano tone is rich and full, rather close in relation to the orchestra. On the first side I was troubled by a regular double swish which seems to come from below the surface, as it were.

For someone wanting to make the *Emperor's* acquaintance and more interested in the music than in sonic perfection or interpretative penetration, this would be a likely investment. But for an extra 17s. 3d. you can get Solomon, which is a performance to treasure for all time. W.S.M.

BEETHOVEN. *Concerto in C major for violin, 'cello and piano, Op. 56. Leonora Overture No. 3, Op. 72a†.* John Corigliano (violin), Leonard Rose ('cello), Walter Hendl (piano), New York Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. Philips Mono ABL3290 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). The item marked † previously available on ABL3225 (11/58).

Triple Concerto:
D. Oistrakh, Knuševičevskij, Oborin,
Philh., Sargent (7/59) 33C1082

The qualities of this performance are the compelling unity of Bruno Walter's conception and its sheer ardour. Readers who have Walter's recording of the Brahms Double Concerto will know what I mean about his personal direction; this is not a fine team of soloists well accompanied by an expert conductor, as is the rival record, but a performance by a conductor who has rehearsed his soloists till they conform to his own view of the score; it is primarily the conductor's own conception. Since the conductor is Bruno Walter, the result is exciting and fine.

As to the ardour, here is the other big difference between this performance and the other, for the Oistrakh Trio play with a cool, classical detachment compared with

the excitements of their colleagues in New York.

Unfortunately, the choice cannot be made just according to which sort of interpretation you may prefer, for this Philips disc, which has been available in America for some time, is greatly inferior in recorded quality to the Columbia. The range of sound between *pp* and *f* (directions that occur in the very first pages of the score) is lamentably limited and the orchestral sound as a whole never sounds alive enough. The string soloists sound well, but the piano tone is dull. Good balance in this work must be difficult to achieve, but here again the Columbia is preferable.

All this is a very great pity, for while there is plenty of justification for the Oistrakh approach to the music, it would have been fine to have Walter's version as a quite different reading. It really is exciting and the rhapsodic glow in the slow movement is particularly good. The soloists are an excellent team, with the superb Leonard Rose showing once again, in this very taxing part, what a wonderful player he is. But especially if the work is unfamiliar to you, you will get a more convincing impression of it from the Columbia record, if only because it is all brighter and clearer. And one cannot but add that unfamiliar Beethoven is better complete on a 10-inch disc, rather than on a 12-inch filled out with the 3rd *Leonora* overture, which most Beethovenites will already possess, possibly even in this very same performance. T.H.

BEETHOVEN. *Violin Romances.* No. 1 in G major, Op. 40; No. 2 in F major, Op. 50. Rudolf Koeckert (violin), Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner.

HAYDN. *String Quartet No. 77 in C major, Op. 76, No. 3, "The Emperor".* Koeckert Quartet (Rudolf Koeckert, Willi Buchner, violins; Oskar Riedl, viola; Josef Merz, 'cello). D.G.G. Heliodor LPX29257 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

We used to have the tune of the G major Romance as a hymn at school, and I have never quite been able to assess its value since. Is it really the unctuous bore it seems to me? Koeckert doesn't appear to like it much either. Nice clean playing, but he puts nothing into the music whatever. The balance is very realistic and infinitely better than the other versions I have heard in which the soloist sticks out a mile. The F major I enjoyed more (we *didn't* sing this one). Even so, not a work that can ever have converted anyone to Beethoven, who, by the way, scarcely bothered to give it any expression marks; no dynamics whatever in the first two-thirds. (He didn't bother to give the other one a tempo.) Only fifteen and a half minutes of music on this side. The Haydn *Emperor* quartet on the back is a reissue of music that originally filled a ten-inch disc costing more than this new one. It was well received back in 1956 by M.M., and the music is far more worth hearing than the Romances, and well recorded. R.F.

BIZET. *Carmen:* Prelude; Entr'actes from Acts 1, 2 and 3; March from Act 4. Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. D.G.G. Mono EPL30453 (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

Suites from *Carmen* seem to turn up every month and I think no more need be said than that the performance here is as bright and lively as you would expect from this orchestra and conductor; and that the sound, perhaps a little boxy in full passages, is particularly vivid in the quieter music. A safe recommendation among all the others. T.H.

BRAHMS. *Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90. Tragic Overture, Op. 81.* Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Lorin Maazel. D.G.G. Mono LPM18541 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Stereo: SLPM138022 (12/59).

The sleeve of this mono version bears no mention of the *Tragic Overture* at all and for one moment I thought we were going to have a frequent business in reverseless on the mono than on the stereo; however, I can reassure readers who may see it in a shop that the overture is included all right.

Maazel, as I suggested before, has the glow and vitality for Brahms but is not yet disciplined enough; and he thinks too much about how to get the maximum effect from this point and that, without caring enough about the over-all build of a movement. There are, indeed, many very exciting moments and, as one would expect, extremes of *pianissimo* and *fortissimo*—at one passage I wondered if even the Berlin Philharmonic could really play so softly. All in all, the first two movements come off well but I think the reading of the third dreadfully slow and sentimental, while speed changes in the finale tend to break up its structure. The overture is played at what, to me, is an absurdly fast speed.

The stereo sound was excellent and the mono is as good as can be. Choice can be made entirely on what you think of this sort of performance. T.H.

★BRAHMS. *Hungarian Dances:* Nos. 1-3, 5-7, 17, 19, 21.

★DVORAK. *Slavonic Dances:* Op. 46, Nos. 1 and 8; Op. 72, Nos. 2 and 7. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Józef Perleś. Vox Stereo STPL511240 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: PL11240 (11/59).

I remember enjoying these dances when they came out in the mono version and I now enjoy them even more, for the stereo sound is a very great improvement. Maybe Vox tried to fit more music than would well go onto the mono record, for I notice that no less than five have been omitted in the stereo cutting. No loss, I would say, for the gain in pleasure as one listens to the sound of them is more than the usual gain of stereo over mono.

They are not always the most fiery performances nor always the most utterly charming of these much-recorded dances

but they are attractive and, as with the mono record, the choice is well made, giving plenty of contrast in speed and mood as we go along.

T.H.

CHOPIN. Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21. *Andante spianato* and *Grande Polonaise brillante* in E flat major, Op. 22. Arthur Rubinstein (piano), *Symphony of the Air* conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. R.C.A. Mono RB16183: ★Stereo SB2067 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Rubinstein last recorded this Chopin F minor concerto with Steinberg and the N.B.C., a disc which was issued in this country in July 1957 and withdrawn soon afterwards at the termination of the H.M.V./R.C.A. contract. It was the best available version of the work in its day, and the same can be said for Rubinstein's new recording. If I remember rightly, Steinberg phrased the orchestral tutti with more loving care than Wallenstein, but there is plenty to be said for the orchestral side of the new disc. For one thing, a real attempt has been made to get a balance between piano and orchestra. In the second half of the first movement development someone seems to have lost heart, for the woodwind are totally inaudible from letter J right up to the recapitulation. But elsewhere countersubjects come through well, and the bassoon solo at the end of the slow movement sounds most beautiful. The orchestral sound on the whole will be too dry for most tastes, and the piano quality is a bit tinny, especially in the mono version. In the stereo disc the wind, who presumably had their own microphone, have been superimposed on the 'cellos at the extreme right, a somewhat improbable place to find them, and there is here and there a lack of realism in the sound. But all discs of Chopin concertos seem to have their defects, and most of them have more defects than this one. What makes it outstanding is, of course, Rubinstein's performance. In the quick movements his playing has an almost slap-dash quality which is endearing and stems from his rhapsodic approach to the music. You listen to every bar, held by the wonderful piano writing, wonderful because Rubinstein makes it so. In the dramatic middle section of the slow movement he brings a tension to the music such as I have not heard before. The result is wonderfully exciting. This is a really superb account of this lovely music.

The concerto is just too long to go comfortably on one side without cutting, and the third movement is wisely relegated to side two. (Even so, eight bars of the final tutti of the first movement are cut. They may not be very good bars, but the music sounds worse without them than with.) As a fill up, Rubinstein plays the *Andante spianato* and *Polonaise*, of which only the polonaise has orchestral accompaniment (perfunctory even by Chopin's standards). The tempos are sharp in the final chord, which is about all I noticed of the accompaniment. Rubinstein manages the poetic

andante ravishingly, and in the polonaise is heroic and wayward by turns, making the music sound far better than it really is.

R.F.

CIMAROSA. Concerto in C major for oboe and piano. Frantisek Hantak (oboe), Alfred Holecek (piano).

HANDEL. Oboe Concerto in G minor.

Frantisek Hantak (oboe), Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vaclav Talich. Supraphon Mono LPM363 (10 in., 14s. 9d. plus 4s. 9d. P.T.).

If anyone has a mind to rush off to the library with a view to tracking down a hitherto unknown Cimarosa double concerto for oboe and piano he may spare himself the trouble; this is our old and nearly always welcome friend Cimarosa-Benjamin. But when the first notes of this record reveal that "and piano" is merely a substitute for "and orchestra" welcome must at the very best on this occasion be guarded; for the result of Hantak's best efforts—which are superlative: he is that kind of player—is only to make this Cimarosa recording sound like one of a good run-through at home rather than a good performance in public.

The Handel has its orchestra, and they play smoothly. Again Hantak shows himself a superlative player—but in this case with a romantic style ill suited to Handel. Scoring any ornamentation whatever of the bare notes he seeks to give them life instead by occasional swoons in the tempo, swoons in which the conductor concurs all too readily.

The recording is adequate, though it affords the strings a very slightly scrawny sound. But the performance of the Handel is not really adequate; not in the same class as that of Herman Töttcher on Archive AP13044, a most beautiful disc coupling this G minor concerto with two others of Handel. In the case of the Cimarosa it is the instrumentation of the new disc which is not really adequate, and here recourse could much better be had to Top Rank XRK501. On this record André Lardrot and (the context makes specification necessary) the Vienna State Opera Chamber Orchestra play Cimarosa-Benjamin well, coupling it with Haydn, Albinoni, and yet once more this ubiquitous Handel in G minor.

M.M.

DVORAK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World". Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. Philips Mono ABL3291 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

DVORAK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World". Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Schüchter. H.M.V. Mono XLP20014 (12 in. 16s. 11½d. plus 5s. 6½d. P.T.).

This month's stint of *New Worlds* (there's a stint almost every month just now) consists of one poor bargain and one charmer. Bruno Walter pours love generously into his reading of the beloved

classic; he knows exactly how Dvořák felt, and he gives it strong character: lilting charm, a suspicion of cheekiness, freshness, and trim features. There's an enormous amount of detail, cleanly and pointfully displayed within the ample frame of the symphony. Walter leaves none of its grandiose moments out of the picture, but he moulds all the constituent elements so as to show a characteristic rather than monumental symphony. And it is precisely this liveliness of character that seems to be its essence, its Czechishness. Czechs appreciate it instinctively (Karel Ancerl most notably on disc), but also some foreigners: Toscanini, Walter, Wolfgang Sawallisch are three of them who have captured the individuality of its spirit on disc. Some of Walter's tempi are rather slower than we're used to—that of the finale particularly—and you may be surprised to hear the phrases chiselled so elegantly, as if they were Mozart. The total effect is most endearing. The American orchestra plays responsively, not with ideal unanimity; and the recording, although not spacious by modern standards, is quite clear and lively of its sort, an able servant of Walter's magic touch.

Magic is not the *mot juste* for Schüchter's reading. It's heavy weather all the way, very ponderous in accent and texture. The orchestra plays stodgily, with unsteadily articulated solos and the engineering is woolly.

W.S.M.

DELIBES. Coppélia Ballet—Suite. Sylvia Ballet—Suite. Belgian National Radio Orchestra conducted by Franz André. Telefunken Mono GMA8: ★Stereo SMA8 (12 in., 19s. 9½d. plus 6s. 5d. P.T.).

Coppélia Suite: Prelude and Mazurka; Entr'acte and Valse; Valse de la poupee; Czardas. *Sylvia* Suite: Prelude—Les Chasseres; Intermezzo and Valse; Pizzicato Polka; Cortège de Bacchus

Even at its lower price this is bad value. Short sides (less than 20 minutes, one only just over 15), poor orchestral playing (very thin strings), unpredictable conducting, and a very close, gritty sound. I have not yet heard the stereo version, and can only hope that it sounds more agreeable. W.S.M.

FRANCK. Symphonic Variations.

LALO. Piano Concerto. Orazio Frugoni (piano), Vienna Volksoper Orchestra conducted by Michael Gielen. Vox Mono PL11220 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Stereo: STPL511220 (12/59).

Having observed that Vox do not yet venture to accommodate as much music on their stereo as their mono discs, presumably because their grooving technique is less advanced in this department, I took it that, when STPL511220 came out in mono, there would be an extra item on the Franck side. However, there isn't; surely 14½ minutes is poor value for a 12 inch mono LP disc?

The music I discussed in December: Lalo's concerto is a curiosity that will attract admirers of that period (I am one, but I find it a dull piece because it never gets properly worked up), though it is only quite well played, and the *Symphonic*



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★**GERSHWIN.** *Porgy and Bess*—
Symphonic Picture for Orchestra (arr.
Bennett).

★**GOULD.** *Latin-American Symphonette*. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. Capitol Stereo SP8474 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: P8474 (7/59).

Russell Bennett's "Symphonic Picture" of *Porgy and Bess* is a most beautifully-arranged outsize instrumental selection of tunes from Gershwin's heart-warming score. Morton Gould's *Latin-American Symphonette* is a skilful and entertaining organisation of the rhythms of rumba, tango, guaracha, and conga into the shape of a four-movement orchestral sinfonietta. And both pieces are given a first-class performance by the Hollywood Bowl orchestra, sympathetic both to the popular and to the symphonic elements in each of the scores.

Yet enjoyment of these pleasures is surely more easily to be obtained from the mono version of the disc than the stereo. For, while either is in any normal sense a very good recording, the mono one has a fullness of tone not so strongly evident in the stereo. Perhaps the surface of the stereo manages to improve on that of the other. Yet both discs are very good in this respect, and the marginal improvement stereo offers here—the only one I can discern—would not seem to me to begin to outweigh the falling off in tone-quality. M.M.

GERSHWIN. *An American in Paris*. Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henryk Cyzyk.

MILHAUD. *Le boeuf sur le toit*.

Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andrzej Markowski. D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 478036 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

It's my belief that America has so far only produced one composer of real genius, and that's George Gershwin. In fact, I shouldn't be surprised if future generations accord him a position in twentieth-century music equivalent to the one we grant to Johann Strauss in the nineteenth century—that of an inspired light music composer who has outlasted many of his more earnest, ambitious and highly-rated contemporaries. Certainly, in his own sphere, he's incomparable; Milhaud's ballet suite *Le boeuf sur le toit*, based on Latin-American dance-rhythms, can't hold a candle to Gershwin's rather crude *Cuban Overture*, let alone to his polished *American in Paris*. Milhaud, who, to be fair, was the first and is so far the only serious composer to make effective use of jazz idioms (in his superb *Creation du Monde*), is shown here at his silliest—as a French *farceur* of the most boring kind, brashly battering out the more obvious type of rumba tune, without a trace of invention, gaiety, wit or satire.

Unfortunately, the contrast is not easy

to feel on this record, since both works are played crudely, and the Gershwin more so than the Milhaud. The Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra seems to have a slight idea of Latin-American music, but none at all of the jazz style; and one of the most depressing things to listen to is jazz-type music played straight by uncomprehending serious musicians. In any case, the performances as such are extremely rough and ready. A much better buy would be the all-Gershwin Mercury MMA11004, on which Antal Dorati conducts *An American in Paris* and also portions of *Porgy and Bess*; I have not heard it, but M.M., reviewing it last year, described it as "one of the happiest Gershwin discs available", and as "very well recorded"—which this isn't. D.G.

GRIEG. *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16. Eileen Joyce (piano), Royal Danish Orchestra conducted by John Frandsen. *Melody in A minor*, Op. 47, No. 3; *Nocturne in C major*, Op. 54, No. 4. Eileen Joyce (piano). Saga Mono XID5027 (12 in., 19s. 2d. plus 5s. 10d. P.T.).

Eileen Joyce's reading of Grieg's piano concerto has long been familiar: clean, neatly laid out, expressive but not too sentimental, strong at the climaxes but not over-inflated, and warm in timbre. Listened to in the cold and merciless ambience of the gramophone record, the interpretation hasn't the distinctive character that makes it specially desirable; and the quality of the sound is rather lacking in presence, though the loud passages are apt to distort.

The record also contains two solo fill-ups, the Nocturne from Op. 54 and the Melody from Op. 47; here Miss Joyce's rubato seems somewhat artificial. There is no mention of these pieces anywhere on the sleeve! W.S.M.

GRIEG. *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen*, Op. 65, No. 6. *Norwegian Melodies*, Op. 63: No. 2, Cow-Keeper's Tune and Country Dance. *Two Elegiac Melodies*, Op. 34.

SIBELIUS. *King Christian II Suite*, Op. 27: No. 1, Elegy; No. 2, Musette. *Pelléas and Mélisande* Incidental Music, Op. 46: No. 7, Entr'acte. *Finlandia*, Op. 26. *Kuolema* Incidental Music, Op. 44: Valse Triste. **New Symphony Orchestra of London** conducted by Charles Mackerras. R.C.A. Mono RB16179: ★Stereo SB2063 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

I enjoyed this record very much indeed, for its excellent performances, its first-class sound, both mono and stereo, and for its variety as a programme. R.C.A. have sensibly not put a composer to a side but have arranged the items to afford the greatest enjoyment to those who want to listen to a side all through. The music contains, too, a good blend of the very familiar and the less well known.

Mackerras is as sympathetic to such things as the Grieg *Elegiac Melodies* as he

is effective with *Finlandia*. Sibelius' beautiful *Elegy* gets a particularly lovely performance. The actual quality of sound seems to me as good on the mono record as it is on the stereo—and remarkably the same; indeed, the only way I could tell them apart for much of the time was by a certain amount of direction from the stereo violins and cellos. A highly enjoyable miscellany. T.H.

GRIEG. *Peer Gynt*: Suites Nos. 1 and 2, Opp. 46 and 55†.

MENDELSSOHN. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Overture, Op. 21; Scherzo, Op. 61, No. 1; Intermezzo, Op. 61, No. 5; Nocturne, Op. 61, No. 7. *Philadelphia Orchestra* conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips Mono GBL5525 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). Item marked ↑ previously available on ABE10019 (5/58).

This is one for schools to think about, and also parents wanting a present for musical children; in other words it contains a lot of music that is easy to like, well played, very well recorded, and at a very reasonable price. There is some rather poor intonation from the woodwind on the final chord of "Solveig's Song" as also on the chords that begin this piece, and they may in part be due to "wow". And in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* scherzo there is a microphone a little too near the woodwind for true realism. Otherwise there is not much wrong and a great deal that goes very well indeed. Surfaces are remarkably silent while most of the playing is excellent and the quality makes the music vivid and interesting. R.F.

HANDEL. *Concertos*. Harp and Lute Concerto in B flat major, Op. 4, No. 6 (arr. Thurston Dart). Harp Concerto in F major, Op. 4, No. 5 (arr. Thurston Dart). Concerto Grosso in C major, "Alexander's Feast". Osian Ellis (harp), Desmond Dupré (lute), Thurston Dart (organ continuo), Philomusica of London directed by Granville Jones. London L'Oiseau-Lyre Mono OL50181: ★Stereo SOL 60013 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

This is a very plucky record indeed. After hearing the Harp and Lute Concerto (with plucked string accompaniment) and the Harp Concerto, which contains a great deal of writing for the loftier part of the instrument, I felt as if I had been drawn through a hedge backwards. Desmond Dupré and Osian Ellis do their best with this somewhat intractable texture, and Granville Jones directs the Philomusica with a sympathetic arm. The piece that really gave me pleasure was the fine Concerto in C, in which the violin duetting of Carl Pini and Neville Marriner struck me as being very near the zenith of sonorous pulchritude. This work is outside the accepted "sets" of Handel concertos, and sometimes gets overlooked; but it is a magnificent piece, and I doubt whether it will ever be played

better than on this disc. I find the Oiseau-Lyre stereo more appealing and realistic than the mono pressing, even when this is played with a stereo cartridge over two speakers.

D.S.

HANDEL. *Water Music*: Overture; Bourrée; Hornpipe; Aria; Loure; Air; Coro. **Concertgebouw Orchestra** conducted by **Eduard van Beinum**. Philips Mono ABE10155 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.).

The late Eduard van Beinum had the knack of making his Concertgebouw Orchestra play softly and lightly, and this it does with impressive skill in the lighter dances of this brief selection from *The Water Music*. Well in the picture is an artistically played harpsichord, and the general sound is good besides being excellently balanced.

D.S.

HANDEL. *Water Music Suite* (arr. Harty).

HAYDN. *Symphony No. 94 in G major, "Surprise". Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **William Steinberg**. Capitol Mono SP8495: ★Stereo SP8495 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

The finale of the Haydn is played with some degree of vitality; but until then that particular quality is hard to seek. Workmanship is in evidence everywhere as far as the orchestra is concerned, in that the playing is never less than euphonious. Artistry, however, is less in evidence; the poetic turn of a phrase is rarely found. Perhaps the setting by Steinberg of dull tempos (and, in the Handel, some odd ones) did not help. Nor, as far as the listener is concerned, does the quality of recording really help; for while no major deficiencies obtrude, it seems difficult to reproduce the sound of the orchestra particularly clearly or brilliantly, whether from the mono or stereo version.

In general, the record must be rated a dull one, but no worse than that. Save, of course, to the Handel specialist, or even to the Handel-Harty specialist, who will find Steinberg's tempos have managed to make some of his favourite moments scarcely recognisable.

M.M.

HINDEMITH. *The Four Temperaments*. **Leon Fleisher** (piano). **Five Pieces, Op. 44, No. 4. Funeral Music for Viola and Strings**. **Paul Godwin** (viola). **Netherlands Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Szymon Goldberg**. Philips Mono A00365L (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Available to special order only.

The Four Temperaments:

Lukas Foss, Zimbler Sinfonietta

(2/53) AXL2001

Five Pieces, Op. 44, No. 4:

S.C.O., Munchinger

(3/57) DGM18801

These three works by Hindemith for (basically) string orchestra make a coupling not only of considerable interest in itself, but most illuminating to the student of the development of Hindemith's style. The earliest composition here is the set of *Five Pieces* which form the concluding

section—"for more advanced players"—of an educational work written in 1927 and demanding of the string players the use of the first position only. This practical function for music was welcomed by Hindemith, the leading *Gebrauchsmusik* (music for use) composer, and the result demonstrated clearly enough that such music could be as enjoyable to the listener as it was useful to the player. The performance here by Szymon Goldberg's team is notable for its accomplished ensemble, and in the fast movements (especially the finale) its fine bite and rhythmic energy. The tone, whether in the playing or in the recording, emerges as rather coarser than in the Stuttgart performance, but the balance between the admirable solo violin (presumably Goldberg himself) and the rest in the *concertante* finale is better than in the Decca version.

The *Funeral Music*, which is most beautifully played by Paul Godwin and the orchestra, is an extremely moving work which triumphantly vindicated Hindemith's principle that a composer should be a thorough "professional", ready to adapt himself to any circumstances. Hindemith was in London in 1936, about to give a broadcast of his *Viola Concerto*, when the death of King George V was announced. He at once sat down and wrote this elegy, in the space of three hours; the parts were copied immediately, and he played the new work at the concert the following evening. There is, by the way, something strange about the final section, which, like Berg's *Violin Concerto* (composed the previous year), introduces with profound effect a Bach chorale: in the score this is shown as *Vor deinen Thron tre' ich*, and all commentators (including the writer of the very good sleeve-note here) have referred to it as such. Yet the fact is that this doesn't appear to be *Vor deinen Thron* at all, but a free elegiac version of, of all things, the *Old Hundredth*. How did Hindemith come to know this tune, and how (unless in the spirit of composition his memory played him false) did it manage to get misattributed?

The Four Temperaments was originally intended as a ballet in 1940, but with its extremely approachable, "human" style has become quite popular as a concert work for strings and *concertante* piano. This recording is dynamically more restricted than the extraordinarily fine D.G.G. version, whose affectionate warmth of tone it cannot match; but there is plenty of vitality in this performance, and such traps as the *presto* section of *Melancholic* are surmounted with consummate finesse. This is altogether a most attractive disc. L.S.

★LUIGINI. *Ballet Egyptien, Op. 12—Suite*. **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Anatole Fistoulari**. H.M.V. Stereo RES4267 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). Mono: 7ER5128 (5/59).

Excellent playing and superb recording, with stereo at its best and mostly silent surfaces, deserve better music than this, but those who like *Ballet Egyptien* will like it better than ever in this outstanding version. I can certainly say that I have never

enjoyed it so much myself. Perhaps I should add that between the two pieces on side two, instead of silence, there is what sounds like a recording of a needle going round and round on a final scroll; this also intrudes on the beginning of the next piece.

R.F.

MARTINU. *Symphony No. 6, "Fantaisies Symphoniques". Memorial to Lidice. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra* conducted by **Karel Ancerl**. Supraphon Mono LPV416 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Symphony No. 6:

Boston S.O., Munch

(3/58) RB16030

Martini's *Fantaisies Symphoniques*, subtitled Sixth Symphony, was one of the fifteen new works composed for the 75th anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. According to the composer's own note, it was written with Munch's style of conducting, and in particular his sense of rubato, in mind. The original performers, as shown above, have recorded the work; and the only drawback to that disc is that the coupling is Walter Piston's undistinguished Sixth Symphony (another 75th anniversary work). But the new Supraphon has its drawbacks too. The *Fantaisies* take half a side more in this version—although a short and good piece like the *Memorial to Lidice* is better value, in every way except in terms of playing-time per pound, than a symphony one does not want to hear very often.

The drawbacks are that the playing of the Czech Philharmonic is less virtuosic than that of the Boston, and that the recording, though very adequate, is less brilliant. All the same, Karel Ancerl (who was responsible for the first European performances of the work) gives so musical and so expressive a performance that on the whole I would consider the Supraphon the better buy. The *Fantaisies* (three movements) are free-flowing pieces, direct and warm in expression, with plenty of tonal variety, sudden surprises and fascinating turns of thought. Lidice is the Czech village savaged by the Nazis. Martini composed his *Memorial* in 1943. It falls into three parts: an elegy, a central section expressive of mounting resolution, and a gravely determined finale (though still heavily shadowed by tragedy) in which the opening bars of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony symbolise the heroic spirit of resistance. A.P.

MENDELSSOHN. *Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64.*

PROKOFIEV. *Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63.* Jascha Heifetz (violin), **Boston Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Charles Munch**. R.C.A. Mono RB16182: ★Stereo SB2066 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Mendelssohn Concerto—Stereo:

Ricci, L.S.O., Gamba

(10/58) SXL2006

Ferras, Philh., Silvestri

(7/59) ASD278

Campoli, L.P.O., Boult

(9/59) SXL2026

There's no doubt about it, Heifetz is really in a class of his own; it's an insult to him to make comparisons, as though he were just another fine violinist. One feels exactly the same as with Horowitz: once you put the needle down, you're confronted

with the supreme virtuoso of his instrument, whether you like the musical result or not. Personally, when the result is of this calibre, I do like it. The first movement of the Mendelssohn is fast and fierce in the magisterial sweeping style, and why not, when it's marked *Allegro molto appassionato*?

There's great fire and passion in the playing, and a lovely relaxed lyricism in the gentler passages, which is carried over into the *Andante* (as pure and sweet and un-sentimental as anyone could wish) and into the pensive introduction of the finale. The finale itself is of course taken at top speed, and provides a feast of breathtaking virtuosity. If you're less interested in the incomparable violinist of the age than in Mendelssohn's music, and feel that it should be allowed to speak for itself, you couldn't do better than get the Ferras recording, which has plenty of vitality and tenderness and beautiful playing, without forcing the soloist's personality on you at all (I find Ricci too highly-strung in the finale's introduction, and Campoli too sentimental in the *Andante*, though both give excellent performances).

The Prokofiev Concerto again reveals the great virtuoso at work. Heifetz matches the composer's vivid sense of the fantastic with a striking one of his own, brings great intensity to the lyrical themes, and produces an amazing *spiccato* in the finale, like the spitting of cats; on the other hand, the *Andante* (a relaxed movement if there ever was one) is far too high-powered. I imagine that Isaac Stern, on *Fontana* CFL1036, is more faithful to Prokofiev in general (to judge from L.S.'s review). The Prokofiev fan will no doubt prefer that disc, especially as it has for coupling the same composer's First Violin Concerto, but Heifetz is likely to win admirers for Prokofiev by his brilliant personal projection of the music. I wish he had chosen the more captivating First Concerto instead of No. 2 as a coupling, all the same.

The recordings, both mono and stereo, are a noteworthy combination of virtuosic and musical considerations. Heifetz is right on top of the listener (so much so that you can hear the bow engage on the strings), but his *pianissimo* is a real one, and nothing is lost of the orchestral part. Nevertheless, if it were anyone but Heifetz, one would certainly tire of the violinist's proximity. Campoli is spotlighted far too much at the expense of the orchestra, but the Ricci and Ferras recordings are of the admirable concert-balance type, the Ferras being slightly the clearer and a very satisfying sound from all points of view. D.C.

MENDELSSOHN. Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. **Tibor Varga** (violin). **Overtures.** The Hebrides: Calm Sea and a Prosperous Voyage. **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Fritz Lehmann**. D.G.G. Helidor Mono LPX29253 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

I'm sure it's unfortunate that I had to review Tibor Varga's recording of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in the same week as that by Heifetz, but, even so, there's no comparison here with Ferras,

Ricci or Campoli, all of whom I had to hear at about the same time. Varga appears to have attempted a broad, long-spanned interpretation which would be more suitable to the Brahms Concerto. The musing, leisurely opening can hardly be called *Allegro molto appassionato*, and the "big" treatment of the bravura in the first movement is quite out of keeping with the spirit of the work. In the *Andante*, tone is laid on rather sentimentally; only in the finale does Varga redeem himself with some truly Mendelssohnian verve and delicacy. One quite extraordinary flaw is that the first and second movements are separated by a pause, in flagrant contradiction of the score, which links them with a held note on bassoons.

The three above-mentioned versions (not to mention the new Heifetz) are all splendid in different ways, as is the Schneider recording, according to R.F. My own personal preference, not having heard the Schneiderhan, is for Ferras. It's a pity that Varga's account of the Concerto is so lacking in life, as the recording is a good one, and the two overtures used as a fill-up are most poetically played (they are available separately, though, on DG17044, reviewed 5/56).

D.C.

MOZART. Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K.550. **Vienna Symphony Orchestra.**

SCHUBERT. Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D.759, "Unfinished". **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.** Both conducted by **Fritz Lehmann**. D.G.G. Helidor Mono LPX29252 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

Of these two works the Schubert was first issued in 1955 on DG16051 and the Mozart is new to the catalogue, though it must in fact have been recorded several years ago. Performances are well regimented but hardly expressive. The Mozart seems to lack nuances of phrasing. First beats are all of the same loudness (which may satisfy in the middle movements, but not in the first) and often no louder than beats in the middle of the bar. Which is a long way of saying that the playing sounds a bit dull. Another trouble is that the woodwind often sound nearer and louder than the strings, though I must confess that I heard countersubjects I'd never heard before. I enjoyed the Schubert rather more, though the very slow speed of the first movement is worrying at first. But the climaxes are very impressive. Also the work, despite some surface noise, is more realistically recorded. But phrasing might have been more sensitive here too. R.F.

MOZART. Piano Concertos. No. 18 in B flat major, K.456: No. 20 in D minor, K.466. **Robert Casadesus** (piano), **Columbia Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **George Szell**. Philips Mono GBL5510 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.).

Both Casadesus and Szell are artists whom I admire greatly in some works, but their performances of these two Mozart concertos seem to be over-drawn, un-

mannerly and aggressive. It is in the opening allegro movement of each concerto that their very forthright approach is most acceptable, and particularly in the impassioned D minor. We may feel that this is Mozart seen through Beethoven's spectacles, but nevertheless it is a possible interpretation. But what are we to make of the *Romanze* in this same concerto? It starts at a quick tempo that leaves very little room for romance, or any expression whatsoever; we can justify this if we like by saying, "They want to avoid the nineteenth-century approach", but in that case why is the middle section pounded out in such an intolerably coarse manner? Both the finales are taken *prestissimo*, which to my mind turns their amiable high spirits into a neurotic scramble.

The recording is not exceptionally good, and my review copy had obtrusive surface-noise on the side containing the D minor concerto. But in spite of the very reasonable price of this disc I cannot recommend this performance of the D minor in a month when I have also listened to Richter's and Annie Fischer's. As for the B flat, the alternative version by Ingrid Haebler (Vox PL11010) seems to me distinctly preferable.

J.N.

MOZART. (a) **Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K.466.**

PROKOFIEV. (b) **Piano Concerto No. 5 in G major, Op. 55.** **Sviatoslav Richter** (piano), **Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra** conducted by (a) **Stanislaw Wislocki** and (b) **Witold Rowicki**. D.G.G. Mono LPM18595: ★Stereo SLPM 138075 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

I half expected to find that Richter would take a romantic line with the Mozart, but not a bit of it. He is such a consummate technician that he can keep his dynamic level down to that of chamber-music throughout the concerto, without once sounding as if he were tempted to show what a modern grand piano can do. But of course this is more than a matter of mere technique. Everything about this performance is poised, restrained, classical. The tempi are moderate. If you compare the beginning of the whole concerto with either of the other versions reviewed this month you will hear at once what I mean: there is no attempt to emphasise the music's inherent drama, and as a result the strings' syncopated crotchetts tell far more clearly. As a matter of fact I am inclined to think that the accompaniment in this recording is rather more distinguished than in the new Columbia issue. It is true that the Warsaw woodwind do not phrase with the same long-drawn suavity that we hear from the Philharmonia players, but Stanislaw Wislocki gets less perfunctory phrasing from the strings.

But of course it is the pianist's performance that most people will be interested in, and here I can only report that Richter's grows upon me with each hearing. It is less intense than Annie Fischer's, I think, and you might even find it dull at a first hearing. But listen to the subtlety of his rubato at the first entry in the opening

movement; listen, too, to the perfectly judged staccato in bars 3 and 7 of the slow movement (which Fischer ignores); listen to the gradations of touch in that difficult middle section of the same movement, where for once he really lets us hear the woodwind. One could go on almost indefinitely, this performance is so full of rewarding details; but instead I shall confine myself to saying that this is one of the finest performances of a Mozart concerto that I have heard—subtle but strong, and steering a secure middle course between the aggressiveness of some virtuosi and the feminine prettiness that is too often allowed to pass for "Mozartian style".

The Prokofiev concerto is one of the last works he wrote before his return to Soviet Russia; it was first performed with the composer as soloist in Berlin in 1932. I cannot say that I warm to it very much, even in such a superlative performance as this. It seems to me far drier and spikier than anything Stravinsky has ever written, and I find it rather ironic that this should be considered more acceptable in Russia today than such work as Stravinsky's *Capriccio*. However it is witty in a rather defiant way, very occasionally tender, and in this performance at least the dynamic momentum never flags for a moment. When I add that the only fault I can find with the recording is a slight weakness of bass in both stereo and mono versions, I think you will see why I urge any Mozart-lover to overcome whatever distaste he may at first feel for the Prokofiev and at least listen to this record.

J.N.

MOZART. Piano Concertos. No. 20 in D minor, K.466; No. 23 in A major, K.488. **Annie Fischer** (piano), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Sir Adrian Boult**. Columbia Mono 33CX1686 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

The D minor concerto, for all its popularity, has not fared particularly well in the matter of recordings. Now three new ones arrive in the same month, and two of them, in their different ways, prove to be very good. Annie Fischer takes a rather more personal line with the piano part than Richter on the record reviewed above. In principle this seems to me a good thing, for it is absurd to imagine that Mozart restricted himself, when playing these concertos, to the scanty marks of expression in the scores. The soloist has the right—and indeed the duty—to make his own personality felt through the notes. Still, there are bound to be differences of opinion as to when the artist's personality begins to obscure Mozart's, and I couldn't help wondering whether that had not occurred in the slow movement of this concerto. Here Fischer seems bent on emphasising the contrast between the serene outer sections and the more agitated middle one. In order to do this she completely ignores the written out staccato in the third and seventh bars of the main theme, turning them into a smooth and far less interesting legato—pointless in any case, since the strings play the notes as Mozart wrote them when they take the

tune over in their turn. Then, when Fischer comes to the middle section she allows the agitated character of the music to tempt her into playing too loud, forgetting that she is here in dialogue only with the wind band—flute, oboes, bassoons and horns. In general though, her romantic approach to this concerto (and to the A major as well) gives warmth to the music without doing any damage of this kind, and in many places she gives us wonderfully lyrical phrasing, as anyone who knows her previous record of Mozart concertos would expect.

I am rather less happy about the accompaniment this time, though. The orchestral playing is not as good as the Philharmonia can give us, and in fact it sometimes sounds positively perfunctory. One does not want the music sentimentalised, of course, but there is surely room for a little more grace than we get, for example, in the opening tutti of K. 488—particularly when the soloist's interpretation is conspicuous for its grace. At times Boult seems concerned to preserve the momentum of the movement (which is important, of course) at the expense of everything else.

The recording is very good on the whole, with some slight oddities of balance that should have been corrected. For example the clarinets, particularly the first, are pretty inaudible in the second movement of K. 488; the ravishing suspensions in bars 51 and 52 certainly don't make their proper effect. The horns are also rather backward in this concerto, but in the finale of K.466 the bassoons seem to have been specially brought up, with odd results. The sound of the full orchestra is also rather less clear at times than it should be, with the piano a little too much in the foreground, but in general the relationship between them is natural enough, and certainly better than in the average recording of Mozart piano concertos.

I have mentioned these small faults of balance simply because they should not happen at all, but I can't say they affect the musical value of the record very much. This is certainly a much more satisfactory coupling of these two concertos than its only rivals, those by Serkin and Haskil (which I compared last December). There are other versions of the A major which score by virtue of better orchestral playing, but together with Richter's new recording this version of the D minor eclipses all previous ones.

J.N.

MOZART. Violin Concerto No. 4 in D major, K.218. **Johanna Martzy** (violin). **Symphony No. 39 in E flat major, K.543.** **Bavarian Radio Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Eugen Jochum.** D.G.G. Heliodor Mono LPX29251 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

This record is astonishingly good value. Both the performances on this disc can stand on their own merits in the most exalted (and expensive) company. Jochum, as I have had occasion to remark before, gets wonderfully musical playing from his Munich orchestra, and this is only emphasised by the fact that they are here reduced to

chamber strength. The slow movement of the symphony is taken rather steadily, it's true, but there is none of the sagging sensation that might result if the orchestra were larger. In fact the playing throughout has a controlled impetus that makes it a delight to listen to. Martzy plays the solo part in the concerto with all the spirit and elegance one could hope for, and although she is (as usual) recorded just a shade too close, the relationship between her and the orchestra sounds unusually natural. For the sake of strict accuracy I should perhaps say that for the best results one needs to give a slight boost to both bass and treble, but altogether this is a most rewarding issue that deserves every success.

J.N.

RACHMANINOV. Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18. **Preludes.** No. 1 in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2; No. 6 in G minor, Op. 23, No. 5. **Julian von Karolyi** (piano), **Munich Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Hans Rosbaud.** D.G.G. Heliodor Mono LPX29254 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

Karolyi plays the concerto with both neatness and strength; a skilful performance that seems a little unforthcoming only when on occasion the music calls for the admitted extremes of romantic expression. The orchestra, too, plays both neatly and strongly, and is persuaded by Rosbaud into an excellent ensemble with the soloist. This ensemble remains unimpaired even by a curious trick of Karolyi's of delaying the start of a new tune by sometimes nearly a beat, tending to upset the pulse of the music in the listener's ear. This mannerism could become irritating; but surely little else could in this agreeable performance.

The recording is mellow, lacking something only in general brilliance and, rather more seriously, in depth of piano tone. Apart from a horn who suddenly looms larger than life when playing his tune in the first movement there is also a first-class balance between orchestra and piano. Fortunately the piano tone itself improves considerably for the fill-up. Karolyi, however, gives here only an unimposing performance of the C sharp minor Prelude, and a rather hurried, though very clear one of the G minor. These preludes are also available, coupled with Grieg's *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen*, on a D.G.G. EP, EPL30044. (5/57).

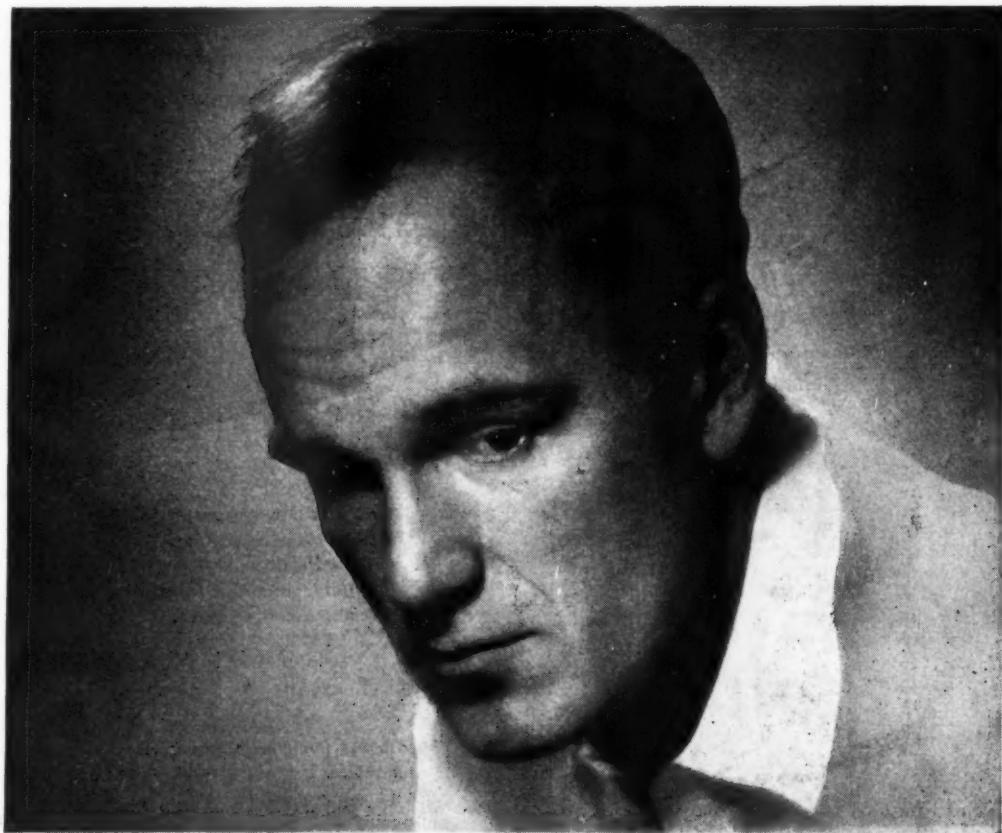
M.M.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34. **TCHAIKOVSKY. Capriccio Italien,** Op. 45. **R.C.A. Victor Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Kiril Kondrashin.** R.C.A. Mono RB16180: ★Stereo SB2064 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.).

There's plenty of colour and excitement on this disc—but hardly plenty of music: we're offered thirty-one minutes in all, which could almost be got on to one side. Surely Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slave* and one of Rimsky's overtures could have been thrown in for good measure? Kondrashin gives vital and sensitive performances of



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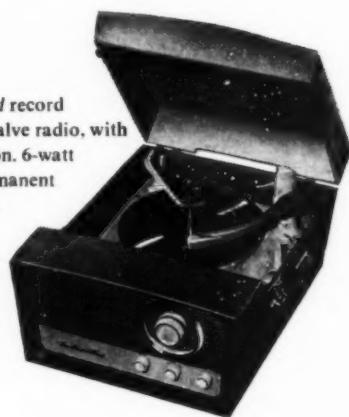
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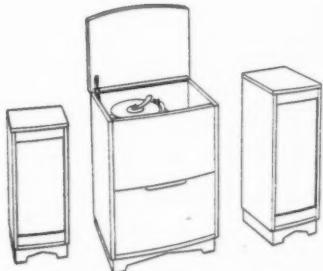
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both works, though I've often heard the opening of the *Capriccio Espagnole* sound more ebullient. The recording is nice and firm, but there's a hard edge on the brass, the woodwind get lost at times (for example, in the flutes' argument with the solo trumpet in the *Capriccio Italien*), and the climaxes are not as brilliantly clear as they might be.

D.C.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. (a) *Russian Easter Festival Overture*, Op. 36. **TCHAIKOVSKY.** (b) *Capriccio Italien*, Op. 45. *Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra* conducted by (a) **George Sebastian** and (b) **Wolfgang Sawallisch**. Qualiton Mono BMP3355 (10 in., 17s. 3d. plus 5s. 7½d. P.T.).

I gather that Qualiton, a Welsh firm, have previously specialised in Welsh songs, and this is the first of their discs to come my way. The sound is pretty good, with great clarity and perhaps a little too much imminence. There is definitely too much surface noise, though I cannot say it worried me much in this loud music. I seemed to detect some cutting back in the Tchaikovsky, which didn't sound as loud at the end with everyone playing flat out as it had earlier with fewer instruments not straining themselves so much. Nevertheless the quality as a whole is bright and attractive. Performances are middling, quite good enough to enjoy but not to rave about. Sawallisch doesn't sound wholly in sympathy with Tchaikovsky, and is probably too refined a musician to cope with the rather vulgar return of the little six-eight folk-song near the end *fff* in B flat; he certainly makes little of it. This is respectable if not exhilarating playing. R.F.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. *May Night Overture. The Golden Cockerel Suite. Russian Easter Festival Overture*†. *Lamoureux Orchestra* conducted by **Igor Markevitch**. D.G.G. Mono LPME19170 (12 in., 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.); ★Stereo SLPE133006 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 7s. 3d. P.T.). The item marked † appears only in mono form.

D.G.G. must sometimes think that we conduct a kind of running battle against them about their sleeves but though they do, of course, produce some excellent ones, they continue to have the strangest lapses. Here, on both mono and stereo sleeves, as well as on the labels, all we are told about the four pieces that make up the *Coc d'Or Suite* is that they are Allegro—Moderato—Andantino—Allegro assai. Someone has evidently got hold of the conductor's score and copied out the speed direction at the start of each piece, completely unhelpful to the listener coming fresh to this music and even misleading. Why not give the usual evocative titles that help the listener to imagine what this most imaginative music should suggest to him? The sleeve-note itself, in the usual four languages, is only very general (and a large part of it is about the conductor) and is likewise no help. Yet there is no lack of space, what

with advertisements for other records and, on the stereo sleeve, a lot about stereo records, also in four languages. The English version of the note could well be edited by an Englishman.

I am sorry to crab at such length about this but it is no use throwing this sort of opera music at the listener without giving him some idea of what it's all about, what to imagine. When we get to the music we find excellent performances, while the mono sound is good and the stereo positively brilliant. (I wonder why the same orchestra and conductor, on a Wagner record reviewed elsewhere in this issue, sound nothing like as brilliant in stereo.)

The stereo record does not contain the *Russian Easter Festival Overture* but this is not the usual less generous measure for stereo, for it is a 10-inch disc as against a 12-inch mono, so that's fair enough.

Incidentally, what a very charming overture the *May Night* is and all too infrequently played.

T.H.

SCHUMANN. (a) *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 54. (b) *Introduction and Allegro appassionato* in G major, Op. 92. (c) *Novelette* in F major, Op. 21, No. 1. (d) *Toccata in C major*, Op. 7. *Sviatoslav Richter* (piano), with the *Warsaw National Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra* conducted by (a) **Witold Rowicki**, (b) **Stanislav Wislocki**. D.G.G. Mono LPM18597: ★Stereo SLPM138077 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Piano Concerto, Stereo:
Solomon, Philh., Menges (7/59) ASD272
Rubinstein, R.C.A. S.O., Krips (7/59) SB2033

It was as a Schumann player (DGM18355) that Richter first captured attention in this country (he has never played here), and his version of the piano concerto is accordingly an event. If it comes as a slight disappointment, this is because, like the Schubert pieces on Richter's recital record (reviewed elsewhere), his playing is so unbiased. At first the performance seems good, finely judged, but ultimately unexciting; the orchestral playing is no great shakes and the engineering is below D.G.G.'s most accomplished, though some of the piano tone, particularly in the high treble, is extremely vivid. Several later playings, of both mono and stereo versions, have modified this response. I no longer find Richter's enunciation of the first theme mannered, but on the contrary rather revealing, a shy, feminine question; and his treatment of the *ritenuto* bridge to the second subject (bars 60-66) has come to sound convincing and not forced. I still think he takes too masterful a view of the cadenza; according to Clara Schumann, as reported by Adelina de Lara, "it should be played very calmly, pensively and peacefully, with humility and love". The interpretation as a whole is extremely stylish, and wears well. If it were only a matter of the concerto I wouldn't place Richter's version above that of Solomon, which is equally loyal and less provocative but also less clean-cut, better accompanied and more comfortably engineered. The D.G.G. balance brings the

orchestra rather close, and the stereo is not neatly focused, with swimming strings.

However, there's the other side, and this is so marvellous that it made me persuade myself to think again about the concerto. The Introduction and Allegro is not often played, and is not otherwise available; it is an imaginatively constructed piece, with some stodgy moments (which Richter drags into the sunlight as best he may) and also some glorious romantic passages. The Introduction, with its weeping arpeggios, twilit horn calls and yearning harmony, suggests Brahms and also, very forcibly, the young Richard Strauss.

Richter leads a determined, captivating performance, capably accompanied (excellent horn player). Then, pausing only to throw off the F major novelette with sparkling attack and excellently judged chording, he leaps at the celebrated Toccata and proceeds to knock every other pianist, starting with Horowitz, for six. He sweeps through this impossibly strenuous piece as if in one gargantuan breath, and not only encompasses every note and every chord (the piano tone is very bright and clear), but points harmonic meaning and rhythmic niceties as though he had all the time in the world. If the forward drive is the most exhilarating feature of this fabulous performance, the real ear-opener is the muscularity and precision with which Richter hammers the pairs of thick cadential chords exactly into place in the coda, while the chattering main theme is still going on as entertainingly as ever. If I were not sure that it is impossible to tape-splice such a passage, I would say that Richter's achievement here was unbelievable, and I shall continue to have my doubts until he has played the piece in my presence. Meanwhile this is the most staggering piano playing I've ever heard on disc. W.S.M.

★**SCHUMANN. Symphony No. 1 in B flat major**, Op. 38. **Manfred Overture**, Op. 115. *Detroit Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **Paul Paray**. Mercury Stereo AMS16017 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.). Mono : MMA11070 (2/60).

I wrote about the mono version of this so recently that I need only say now that I liked neither the performances nor the sound. On this stereo disc the sound is perfectly acceptable, especially if you cut the top a bit, and my only criticism is that the timpani and basses tend to boom, at least they did on my machine.

The performance remains the same, of course, but whereas I don't usually listen all through to performances I have just heard when they appear again in mono or stereo, this time I thought I ought to, to see if I liked Paray's Schumann any better. Not much, I'm afraid, though it was a lesson in how much ungrateful sound (the mono record) can affect one's sympathy with the performance itself, for this time at least I did not feel actually angry about what seems to me very insensitive Schumann playing. Yet it is still a brisk and bright performance at the cost of the affection which you must lavish on this music: and,

above all, you must never press it too hard, which I think Paray does. Other qualities are missing. Where, for example, in this bustling finale is the *grazioso* the composer asks for? In short, on the evidence of this record and on that of the 4th Symphony reviewed below, I do not think Paray, whatever his qualities in other music, a born Schumann conductor.

I should have remarked in my notice of the mono issue, by the way, for those who want to know about such things, that all repeats in every movement are observed.

T.H.

SCHUMANN. Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120.

LISZT. Les Préludes, G.97. Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. Mercury Mono MMA 11080 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Paray seems just slightly more at home in this fourth Schumann symphony than he does in the first (reviewed above), though it is little more than an energetic, bustling reading and I can only recommend it if you like your Schumann that way. Still, there are slight hints of ease in the first movement, while the second is fairly sensitive; the scherzo is taken at a quick speed (as was that of the first symphony) and we then have a fast and energetic finale. But surely there is more beauty and pleasure to be found in this music than Paray ever seems to be aware of; there is grace, charm, feeling, and none of these qualities is to be found in these performances.

The symphony is complete on one side and is played with all repeats except that of the finale. On the reverse we have a performance of *Les Préludes* which comes off much better, but as I listened it did suggest to me one reason why Paray sounds unsympathetic in German music of the romantic kind. He takes every chance to make his orchestra play the shortest of staccatos. A staccato, of course, is a variable thing, ranging from an almost clipped note to quite a long one—yet the composer can't do much more than write a staccato dot and hope that his interpreter will understand how much staccato each note or passage requires. Paray's treatment of every staccato mark anywhere is so smartly short that much of the music acquires a brittle effect, often wholly inappropriate.

The recording is bright and clear, not particularly warm, but as always with Mercury, at least things are left in perspective and the opening of the pastoral section in *Les Préludes*, to name only one place, gains so much from true distance of woodwind and true softness of the general sound.

T.H.

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STRAUSS, RICHARD. Don Quixote, Op. 35. With Paul Tortelier ('cello), Giusto Cappone (viola), Siegfried Borries (violin). **Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche, Op. 28.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. H.M.V. Mono ALP1759 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Don Quixote:
Fournier, V.P.O., Krauss (1/54) LXT2842

Eighteen months ago the catalogue listed three recordings of *Don Quixote*, the richest of all Strauss's tone-poems in psychological detail and musical imagery and, perhaps, entertainment value. Two of those recordings, the Piatigorsky/Munch and the Toscanini, have since disappeared; the remaining one, Krauss's, was a fine, searching interpretation curiously and unrealistically balanced. There was room for a new version, not least because stereo has so much to give to this highly intricate score. Here it is, admirably cast: Tortelier's account of the solo part has long been admired (he recorded it with Beecham in a memorable set of 78s), while Kempe has emerged, during the last decade, as a Strauss conductor second only to Sir Thomas. I understand a stereo equivalent will follow soon. The mono is already very fine, falling short only in those contrapuntal sections which cry out for stereo.

Kempe is known as a musician with a passion for musical architecture; the only thing wrong with his reading of *The Ring* was that there were too few climaxes for some listeners—he saw that huge score as a balanced whole and judged every incident in its relationship to the ultimate cataclysm. So with *Don Quixote*: you may find his interpretation cold and restrained until the last variation and epilogue are reached. I think this is deliberate, and certainly his view brings home the pathos of the *dénouement*, when poor dotty Quixote at last comes to his senses, gazes sadly about him and dies. And Kempe enables everyone to sense, behind the shell of variations upon a theme, another dramatic shape with two strong pillars, the collapse of Quixote's reason, and his defeat by the Knight of the White Moon, followed by his return to comparative sanity and wistful old age. Some conductors make an overpowering thing of Quixote's oration on chivalry at the end of the third variation: Kempe plays it cool (thank you, *West Side*), with dignity, as the well-mannered and kindly explanation of a knight to his squire, and so fits the episode into place. He unfolds the introduction with a gradual rise of tension to the shattering discords that makes a masterly effect. The adventures of the Knight of Sorrows Countenance he observes with a dispassionate eye, narrating all the facts in the right order, so to speak, balancing all the time but showing no bias. Some points of detail: some of the most beautiful oboe playing I've ever heard, in the Dulcinea melody; surely a too literal treatment of the sheep section—they don't sound like sheep; we shall have to wait for stereo to hear some of the contrapuntal detail in the Chivalry Speech; the contrabassoon *glissando* at the end of Variation IV doesn't slide properly, and suggests, not the

collapse of a fat frame in slumber, but that person rolling over on his mattress; the meditative mood of the Vigil is wonderfully conveyed; excellent jollity and bounce in the fake Dulcinea variation; the stream-races vividly along the weir in Variation IX.

No bias then, but plenty of vividness. And, after all, it isn't the story-teller who's prejudiced, but Quixote. Kempe, loyally but never self-effacingly, yields the limelight and the interpretation to Tortelier, and Tortelier is worthy of the honour. This is a rich portrayal, eloquently inflected, full of zest and passion, and in the epilogue, of deeply moving pathos. Of special excellence are his easy, expressive playing in very high registers, and the finely judged balance of solo 'cello with other solo strings when they share the same line. My only regret is one note, just after the gust of night wind in the Vigil scene; Tortelier plays a very sharp E flat—but that's the only quibble.

Great trouble has clearly been taken with the recording, and it's high praise, I now feel, that at no time does one notice where Kempe's work stops and the recording staff takes over. This isn't a performance that knocks you over but I am convinced it will give deep satisfaction over a long period, and I look forward eagerly to the stereo version of it.

It gives unprecedented value, too, in including a fill-up (side one extends to almost 28 minutes). *Till Eulenspiegel* is given a dapper yet invigorating performance, extremely well played, as is *Quixote*, full of intriguing detail, and surging along in a single sweep from start to finish. If it sounds rather small beer after *Don Quixote*, that's because you're foolish enough to play one on top of another. The bonus is there, but I advise you not to spend it at the same time as the basic reward; play *Till* on some other occasion for best enjoyment—that's what the scroll is for.

W.S.M.

★TCHAIKOVSKY. Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23. György Cziffra (piano), Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by André Vandernoot. H.M.V. Stereo ASD135 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: ALP1718 (12/59).

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Curzon, V.P.O., Solti (6/59) SXL2114
Pennario, Los Angeles P.O., Leinsdorf (9/59) SP8417

I was not terribly impressed with Cziffra's account of this concerto when the mono issue was released, and on listening to it again I have exactly the same reactions: the rippling fingers dazzle as before, but the introduction lacks majesty and power, the lyrical parts of the score are deficient in sensibility, and there is far too much use of the sustaining pedal in the bravura octave passages. The faults of the mono version—a slightly dead piano tone and a general lack of immediate impact—are partly rectified by stereo; the orchestra has more power, the piano more ring. Nevertheless, the piano still obscures the orchestra's themes in the quick section of the slow movement.

As regard comparisons, Pennario's less than shattering performance is put out of court by an indifferent recording; choosing

between Van Cliburn and Curzon is not easy. The young American gives a most powerful and musical account of the work, which has been universally and deservedly praised, but in sheer finger dexterity he is surpassed by Cziffra, whom he outdistances in all other respects. He is also surpassed in this respect by Curzon, whom I would personally plump for, even if his recording is the less satisfactory of the two (neither of them is top-line). Curzon gets as near as one can probably hope to the tremendous performance of one's imagination, which alone can realise the true stature of the music. His virtuosity, delicacy and depth of feeling are all outstanding, and he does the whole thing in the true grand manner, as he makes clear he is going to in the very opening bars. I feel, as always, that his reach exceeds his grasp at times in the titanic passages (he is essentially a poetic pianist, after all), but it is indeed a masterly performance.

D.C.

VIVALDI. Concertos. Concerto in G major for harpsichord and strings, "Alla Rustica"; Concerto in D minor for oboe, strings and harpsichord; Sinfonia No. 1 in C major; Concerto in E minor for bassoon, strings and harpsichord; Concerto in F major for oboe, strings and harpsichord; Sinfonia No. 2 in G major. **André Lardrot** (oboe), **Anton Heiller** (harpsichord), **Rudolph Klepac** (bassoon) with **I Solisti di Zagreb** conducted by **Antonio Janigro**. Top Rank Mono 40/005 (12 in., 30s. 2½d. plus 9s. 9½d. P.T.).

This pleasantly planned Vivaldi disc affords good contrast even in continuous listening, with three concertos for strings, two for oboe, and one for bassoon. They are not, as stated in the anonymous sleeve-note, works that were never published in Vivaldi's lifetime, for the D minor Oboe Concerto (P.259) is the ninth concerto of that famous set—Op. 8—which begins with *The Four Seasons*. Vivaldi hinted that this concerto could be played just as effectively on an oboe as on a violin, and in fact it sounds very well in the capable hands of André Lardrot. He cultivates a full, round tone that is eminently suited to the baroque repertory and he is a very musical player, though his technique is sometimes a little behind his musicianship.

The bassoonist, Rudolph Klepac, is a solid and not very subtle player whose sense of rhythm could stand some improvement, for there is a tendency to run ahead in ornate passages. This E minor Bassoon Concerto (P.137) is the longest work on the disc, though very easy on the ear. A favourite Vivaldi trick appears in the slow movement of the other Oboe Concerto (in F major, P. 306) for the soloist weaves his enchanting melodic line above the "acting bass" of the violins.

Both the *Sinfonie* come from manuscripts at Dresden, where No. 2 in G is inscribed to the German violinist Pisendel. It begins with a broad arpeggio figure over three strings, suggesting perhaps a virtuoso cliché transferred to the orchestral violins, where it is not ineffective. The usual pattern of

an operatic overture (fast; slow; fast) is apparent here and in the *Sinfonia* in C, both works probably dating from the late 1730s, when Vivaldi was busy with operatic composition. No soloist appears in the *Concerto alla Rustica* (P. 143) which is really in symphonic style except for brief passages for a solo string quartet in the finale.

Last month I praised Anton Heiller for his excellent continuo playing. In this disc he is much less in evidence, and even sounds uninterested at times. Janigro's strings play well, and the recorded balance is very good.

D.S.

★WAGNER. Tannhäuser: Overture. *Lohengrin*: Preludes to Acts 1 and 3. **Lamoureux Orchestra** conducted by **Igor Markevich**. D.G.G. Stereo SLP133010 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 7s. 3d. P.T.).

These are good performances and I only thought that Markevich's tempo in the *Tannhäuser* overture was exaggeratedly slow at one point, at the clarinet tune after letter D in the score. Otherwise, all well.

Not so well, I thought, with the stereo sound, for stereo really ought to seem more spacious than this. In the quietness of the Act I Prelude to *Lohengrin* it was all very lovely; in the *Tannhäuser* passages where everyone is playing full out and in the *Lohengrin* Act 3 Prelude it seemed a surprisingly congested sort of stereo sound. In fact, the orchestra at its *fortissimo* didn't have much real quality at all. Perhaps this recording was made in an unsuitable hall. At any rate, I can hardly recommend it to stereo enthusiasts.

T.H.

CONSTANTIN SILVESTRI. Overtures. **Humperdinck.** Hänsel and Gretel. **Mendelssohn.** A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 21. **Glinka.** Russian and Ludmilla. **Rimsky-Korsakov.** May Night. **Borodin.** Prince Igor. **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Constantin Silvestri.** H.M.V. Mono ALP1749 (12 in. 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

This record makes an excellent companion to the collection of colourful romantic overtures conducted by Rudolf Kempe on H.M.V. ALP1765, which I reviewed last month, and it affords a nice comparison in styles. Silvestri, in *Russian and Ludmilla* and *Prince Igor*, has the sheer physical excitement which is missing from Kempe's *Carnaval Romain*, and brings a much more passionate warmth to the lyrical melodies in the same overtures than Kempe does to those in *The Merry Wives*. On the other hand, he lacks the deep sense of poetry Kempe reveals in *The Hebrides* and *Oberon*—his *Midsummer Night's Dream* hasn't half enough moonlit magic (the absence of real *pianissimo* is the main trouble); and he is deficient in the firm control of structure shown by Kempe (the exciting passages in the Russian works tend to tumble over in their frenzied drive). All of which goes to show that neither conductor is on the Beecham level (who is, except Sir Thomas?). Nevertheless, there is plenty to admire in both. Silvestri's strong point is that his performances are always vital to a degree, and in the richly sonorous passages (the end

of *Hänsel and Gretel* and the beginning of *Prince Igor*, for example), there is a splendidly full surge of romantic sound. This is definitely a record to have, especially as the recording is much better than Kempe's, being brilliantly clear and full-bodied—a little too much so, perhaps, for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

D.C.

★LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI. Bach. Mein

Jesu, was für Seelenbehr befällt dich in Gethsemane: Praeludio from "Partita in E major". **Gluck.** Lento from "Iphigenie in Aulis": Muzette; Sicilienne from "Armide". **Borodin.**

Nocturne. **Paganini.** Moto perpetuo. **Rachmaninov.** Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14. **Stokowski Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Leopold Stokowski.** Capitol Stereo SP8415 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: P8415 (5/59).

As a collective title "Music for Strings" here hides a collection of music from varied sources in highly romantic arrangements for large string orchestra. The arrangements are mostly given highly romantic performances, too, goodness knows. The physical sound of the playing could surely be said to be never disagreeable; but its style is very often at some remove from that proper to the music. Perhaps Paganini and Rachmaninov come off best: Paganini because there is, exceptionally, no romanticisation, Rachmaninov because there is and it suits him very well. Bach and Gluck are considerably less happy. So will be the man seeking here from the stereo disc a great improvement in sound over that of the already available mono; for, while both discs are in this respect excellent, I for one could not guarantee to distinguish them (when played on the same reproducer) in a blindfold test.

M.M.

ERIC SIMON. Beethoven. Marches, G.145: No. 2 in F major; No. 3 in F major. **Schubert.** March in E flat major, D.733, No. 3. **Krenek.** Three Merry Marches, Op. 44. **Berg.** March from "Wozzeck". **Johann Strauss I.** Radetzky March. **Boston Concert Band** conducted by **Eric Simon.** **Korngold.** Suite—"Much Ado about Nothing", Op. 11. **Boston Chamber Artists** conducted by **Eric Simon.** Argo Mono RG187: ★ Stereo ZRG5187 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

The group title of side 1 of this record—"Austrian Classical Marches"—is rather run in view of the inclusion of the March from *Wozzeck*! No doubt "classical" only means "by serious composers". Beethoven's two goose-stepping efforts were written respectively for the Bohemian Infantry and a royal horse-show; Schubert's is not the "Marche Militaire", but another from the same set—originally written for piano duet, and orchestrated for concert band by Eric Simon. The three examples by Ernst Krenek were commissioned for the Donaueschingen Festival (ah!) in the 'twenties, along with marches by Ernst Toch and Hindemith; they are character-

istic German music of the period, dry, wry, and leeringly satirical. The march from *Wozzeck* sounds magnificent out of its context; it has been expanded to concert form by repetition of both march and trio, followed by the march again to round off with. Father Strauss's *Radetzky March* needs no introduction, I imagine.

On the other side is a suite of unashamedly "kitschy" incidental music by an Austrian *émigré* to the U.S.A., Erich Wolfgang Korngold, who died last year at the age of sixty. This, though pleasantly ear-tickling, will hardly bring him immortality, but he deserves to go down to posterity for his delightful epigram "Nothing can ruin a great piece of music, not even a great performance". The work is given a beautifully crisp performance, with an appropriate amount of *schmalz* in the right places, and is admirably recorded on both mono and stereo; the marches, which have a splendid swagger, are rather over-weighted with percussion on the mono issue, but on the stereo the wind and brass emerge more clearly.

D.C.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BEETHOVEN. Septet in E flat major, Op. 20. Members of the Vienna Octet (Willi Boskovsky, violin; Gunther Breitenbach, viola; Nikolaus Hubner, 'cello; Johann Krump, double bass; Alfred Boskovsky, clarinet; Rudolf Hanzl, bassoon; Josef Veleba, horn). Decca Mono LXT5529: ★Stereo SXL2157 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Mono:

Vienna Octet (3/56) LXT5094
Berlin P.O. Ensemble (9/59) BLP1102
Ensemble of the Bamberg S.O. (2/60) PL11230

Both new issues, mono and stereo, offer the same highly civilised and agreeable performance of the Septet the Viennese players gave us originally on the earlier Decca listed above. It has always been highly recommendable to listeners prepared to enjoy a view of the work which is leisurely both as to style—without any exaggeration of the quality—and as to finding time and space for a generous allowance of repeat-making. Now the reading is more recommendable than ever, for the new mono presentation of it seems to have a slightly clearer sound to it than the original. This impression, however, may well be due to individual discrepancies in surface between the two actual discs tried side by side; much more certain is an even further increase of clarity in the new stereo issue. This adds to a new general crispness of sound some degree of correction of the solitary minor shortcoming of the original recording, a slight over-prominence of the violin. The result may of course be achieved, to the listener's ear, merely by new qualities of separation of the *other* instruments; for this is far from being one of those stereos indistinguishable in good reproduction from their mono equivalents. If anything, perhaps it over-emphasises spatial separation; certainly it does so sufficiently.

It is only in the mono field that any competing versions are at present on offer.

The H.M.V. is a very good version of the Septet: a clear recording of a sprightly performance, entirely satisfactorily accommodated on a ten-inch disc by some judicious repeat-cutting. It is altogether over-enthusiastic repeat-cutting, however, which allows Vox to put the Beethoven on to one side, coupling it with the Mendelssohn string Octet. The performance of both works here leaves something to be desired, and the recording is not the equal of the others under consideration. M.M.

BORKOVEC. String Quartet No. 1. RYCHLIK. Partita da Camera.

WOLF. Italian Serenade. **Vlach Quartet** (Josef Vlach, Vaclav Snilil, violins; Josef Kodousek, viola; Viktor Moucka, 'cello). Supraphon Mono LPV485 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Pavel Borkovec is sixty-five, a pupil of Suk, and a professor of composition in Prague. He wrote his first quartet (it is the first of four) in 1924, and it is in one movement. Later he is said to have come under the influence of Hindemith and Honegger, but there is no trace of these composers in the first quartet, a woolly rhapsodic piece which I found rather likeable. Jan Rychlik, a much younger man in his early forties, has concentrated principally on film music, though he has also written books on orchestration and theory. His *Partita da Camera* won first prize in the "Jubilee Competition of the Union of Czechoslovak Composers in the category of Chamber Music" in 1956, and it may be presumed to be the sort of music the Czech authorities want their composers to write. It is in five short movements, all of them easy to play and easy to listen to. The main tune of the first movement, a set of variations, turns up in all the other movements too, not transformed or disguised in any way but more or less as at the beginning. None of the movements has any growth. The writing is very spare, very clear and rather naive. You can't miss the tunes, whereas in the Borkovec you can miss them very easily. In the latter the harmonies are thick and pleasant. In the Rychlik they are transparent and surely too diatonic for the 1950s. Hugo Wolf's Serenade sounded spicily modern in comparison.

The Vlach Quartet play all this music with expertise, so far as I can tell. The Wolf is beautifully done, and I would only question the little recitative in the middle where the 'cello, marked *ff appassionata*, does not in fact sound any louder than the upper instruments with which it alternates, though they are marked *p* or *pp*. This is partly because the 'cello seems rather distantly placed, but mainly because the player rather lacks bite. Otherwise the performance and recording are very good. R.F.

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BRAHMS. String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2.

MENDELSSOHN. String Quartet No. 4 in E minor, Op. 44, No. 2. Tatrai Quartet, Budapest. Heliodor 479017 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

Brahms Quartet:
Vegh Quartet

(6/55) LXT5027

The Tatrai Quartet give a smooth but, as it seems to me, somewhat disinterested performance of Brahms's finest quartet. Surely the first movement needs more warmth, more surge. Perhaps what I want is just more expression. The great Romantic composers expected their music to be played with touches of rubato and accentuation even when nothing was marked, but in this performance even those touches that are marked are ignored. Where, for instance, is the *ritard*, just before the second subject of the first movement? And there is no change at the *Poco tranquillo* in the finale. And yet the Quartet plays much of this music with agreeable fluency, and the middle movements go pretty well. The finale starts with plenty of attack. The recording is extremely good and so is the balance. There is plenty to enjoy. But I kept feeling the players would have been more at home in earlier or later music, and this to some extent is born out by the excellent playing in the Mendelssohn. None of his quartets can be called well-known, and this is perhaps the least familiar of the lot. There does not seem to have been an LP recording of it available in this country before. And yet the writing is astonishingly adroit. It begins with a tune borrowed from the finale of Mozart's G minor Symphony and marked *appassionato*. It does not sound *appassionato* in this performance, which is taken a little slower than the metronome mark, but the scherzo is deliciously played. The slow movement is rather weak, despite a pleasant end, but the presto finale is splendid with at least one tune of real individuality, and the Tatrai Quartet bring expertise of the highest order to it. Excellent playing of a work it was a pleasure to hear, but a much easier work to bring off than the Brahms.

R.F.

HAYDN. String Quartet in E flat major, Op. 33, No. 2, "The Joke". Budapest String Quartet (Joseph Roisman, violin; Jac Gorodetzky, violin; Boris Kroyt, viola; Mischa Schneider, 'cello). Philips Mono ABE10154 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.).

A complete Haydn quartet on a disc that will fit into the pocket (overcoat-size) is an event, and a delightful quartet it is. Philips rather spoil the joke at the end of it by calling it the *Joke Quartet* (Is this a recognised title?). Musical jokes never seem to me to be funny, but this one is certainly delicious, intended perhaps for the players as much as for anyone listening, and it wears very well indeed. Apart from this entrancing finale, there is a most original slow movement and quite a good scherzo, played on this record just too slow for *allegro*. And the trio is played downright badly. How the first violin could permit himself to make those glissando scoops on every phrase!

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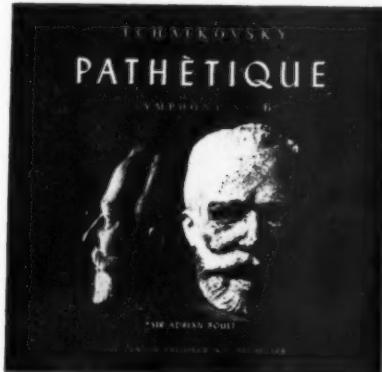
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cannot imagine; they sound appalling. In addition the appoggiaturas in the tune are played wrong. The first movement does not go any too well either; it need not sound quite as uninteresting as it does here. So I can give this little disc only a somewhat lukewarm welcome, adding that the last two movements are nicely played. The recording is good, except that quality goes off momentarily around bars 57-8 in the slow movement.

R.F.

MOZART. *Adagio and Fugue in C minor for Strings, K.546. I Musici.* Philips Mono ABE10156 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.).

This is the fugue that Mozart first wrote for two pianos, and then later added a prelude when he thought it might sound well on a string orchestra. It is certainly a very clever fugue, with so many strettos and inversions that there are times when one wishes Mozart would not be quite so unrelenting about it all. It is well worth hearing once in a while, if only for the sake of the astonishing harmonic clashes, but the adagio prelude is so much more musical. The fugue has what the eighteenth century would have called science and what anyone would call power; the adagio has a soul. The work is certainly to be preferred on string band rather than on string quartet, and I Musici play it splendidly. I would have liked the dotted notes in the adagio held a shade longer in the forte passages so that the following semiquavers could be played more snappily, but that is perhaps only a personal feeling. The recording seems magnificent, though the quality is a little hard in the second half of the fugue.

R.F.

MOZART. *String Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K.421.*

SCHUBERT. *String Quartet No. 14 in D minor, D.810, "Death and the Maiden". Musical Arts Quartet* (Sidney Harth and Teresa Testa, violins; Richard Dickler, viola; David Soyer, 'cello). Top Rank Mono 35/005 (12 in., 26s. 4½d. plus 8s. 7½d. P.T.).

This disc has been in the American catalogue for five years or more, and so far as I can discover the Musical Arts Quartet has not recorded any other works. It could be that the combination has been disbanded for some reason. The players have a good deal of technique and are at their best in the two finales; that to the Schubert goes especially well. But in anything but fast music their habit of pressing on the middle of each note rather than the start becomes extremely irritating once you notice it. The two slow movements are made intolerable by these strings of "bulges", and at times, noticeably in the first movement of the Mozart, the mannerism upsets the ensemble, or appears to do so, for if one player bulges later than the others on a chord he produces an effect of syncopation. The slow movement of the Mozart is in any case given a most superficial performance, while the slow movement of the Schubert is much too fast. The latter failing has this to be said for it that Vanguard have been able to get onto one side a work that normally takes two.

The Musical Arts Quartet get through it in about 31 minutes, five less than Bogey, and they throw in all the usual repeats. I did not detect any falling off in quality at the end of this side, though in fact the quality is not remarkable at any time. The somewhat distant balance is pleasant enough, but there is a lack of detail in the Schubert which appears to be due in part to the resonance, and the sound as a whole is unsympathetic. So for that matter is some of the playing.

R.F.

SCHOENBERG. *Quartet No. 2 in Fsharp minor for Strings and Soprano, Op. 10. String Quartet No. 3, Op. 30. Uta Graf (soprano), Juilliard String Quartet* (R. Mann, violin; R. Koff, violin; R. Hillyer, viola; A. Winograd, 'cello). Philips Mono A01177L (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Available to special order only.

BERG. *String Quartet, Op. 3.*

SCHOENBERG. *String Quartet No. 4, Op. 37.*

WEBERN. *Five Movements for String Quartet, Op. 5. Juilliard String Quartet* (personnel as above). Philips Mono A01178L (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Available to special order only.

These two discs are as essential a part of the library of anyone who wants to understand the music of our own time as are the four containing the complete works of Webern that Philips issued recently. In the American Columbia catalogue, from which they originally came, they were part of a set of three; the first record contained Schoenberg's long First Quartet. Naturally I am sorry that Philips have decided not to issue the complete set in Europe, but at the same time I must admit that these two records contain the heart and soul of the matter.

The Second Quartet was completed in 1910, only five years after the first, but how far Schoenberg had travelled! Here he is on the very threshold of abandoning tonality, and it is in fact in the finale of this quartet that he first takes that step into the unknown. In this context the words sung by the solo soprano, a poem of Stefan George which begins "Ich fühle Lust von andern Planeten" ("I feel the air of other planets") takes on an extraordinarily moving significance. I cannot imagine any unprejudiced music-lover, familiar with at least some of the music of other twentieth-century masters, failing to respond to this quartet—though I know of one or two dodecaphonic purists who find it "hyper-romantic" and "immature". For them I suppose the Third Quartet is more satisfying, for it is one of Schoenberg's most schematically perfect twelve-note works. It dates from 1927, when he was still consolidating the new ground won by his adoption of serial technique. I frankly admit that I have found great difficulty in coming to grips with it in the year or so that I have owned the recording. What makes me sure that the effort is worth repeating is the degree to which the Fourth Quartet yields on closer acquaintance. Here Schoenberg seems altogether more

at ease with his chosen technique—free to give his remarkable powers of musical invention their head. To me this music is infinitely more rewarding in the long run than that of Webern, for what are probably the wrong reasons; it is simply that Schoenberg's style is here so deeply rooted in the Viennese classics that I cannot help hearing this quartet as a kind of non-tonal gloss upon tonal music, its form in fact conditioned by the type of music which it claims not to be.

The Juilliard Quartet play this music magnificently, with only an occasional, and very forgivable, lapse from perfect ensemble. If you have to choose one disc from these two I suppose it would be more sensible to take the second, for as well as Schoenberg's own Fourth Quartet it contains representative early works by his two greatest pupils. Yet if you do this you forego the remarkable experience that the Second Quartet offers.

J.N.

DENNIS BRAIN ENSEMBLE. *Gordon Jacob.* Sextet (with George Malcolm, piano). *Mozart.* Divertimenti No. 14 in B flat major, K.270 (arr. Anthony Baines). *Ibert.* Trois Pièces Brèves. *Dennis Brain Ensemble* (Gareth Morris, flute; Leonard Brain, oboe; Stephen Waters, clarinet; Cecil James, bassoon; Dennis Brain, horn). Columbia Mono 33CX1687 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). This recording is taken from a broadcast performance on September 5th, 1957. A royalty on the sale of this record is being donated to the Dennis Brain Scholarship Fund.

With most British composers of comparable standing (and many foreign ones of considerably less) represented in our catalogues by at least a smattering of representative works, it is extraordinary that hitherto Gordon Jacob has been known to the gramophone library only as an arranger and as the author of some exotic variations on *Annie Laurie*. At last, now, some small part of his lucid, sane and always extraordinarily well laid-out music may be enjoyed on disc. The Sextet for wind and piano is a five-movement major work, declaring successively an *Elegiac Prelude*, a vivacious *Scherzo*, a slow funeral *Cortège* that is nevertheless kept firmly in motion, a consciously antique *Minuet and Trio*, and a *Rondo* with a final elegiac *Epilogue*. The elegiac character of the whole stems from the original purpose of the work, written for the tenth anniversary concert of the Dennis Brain Ensemble in 1956, and dedicated to the memory of Aubrey Brain. This ascription has dictated as well as the general elegiac character some part of the sextet's thematic material; but the selection of the workable notes of Aubrey Brain's name—ABEBA—is necessarily a selection in the manner of the *ad hoc* convenience of Schumann and Berg; really only Bach, whose name works properly, ought to be allowed to get away with this one. Nevertheless in the result the beauty and skill of Jacob's music betrays in no way its crossword origin, and the tribute to the leading horn-player of his age is most certainly one

in which all gramophone-lovers of the older generation will concur.

Those of the comparatively younger generation may perhaps feel more immediately concerned with the other memorial intention of the record, that of commemorating Aubrey's son, Dennis. His immaculate horn-playing may be heard contributing to all the music on the record; his colleagues, too, give every point not only to the Jacob, but also to the other pieces. The Mozart, originally for two oboes, two horns and two bassoons, sounds very well in Anthony Baines's adaptation. The division of the lead between flute, oboe and clarinet gives the idyllic music noticeably more variety of texture than the original scoring was able to produce. It would certainly need one of the severer purists to raise any serious objection to this alternative colouring being made available; even so, it does not quite fill the gap created by the deletion of the excellent Nixa disc of the original version of the music.

The Ibert are joyous pieces ideally suited to the wind medium. They complete a disc which is a most useful addition to the repertory, and one which in the circumstances may be called well recorded. While the brilliance and presence of the best modern sound is of course not in evidence, yet by good fortune the broadcast performance from which the disc originates was itself a pre-recorded one, with the consequence that the quality of sound now given a wider distribution was at least entirely satisfactory. The new record can scarcely fail to contribute to our own pleasure; if in the process it also manages to contribute substantially to the Dennis Brain Scholarship Fund that, too, must surely be accounted yet one further point of recommendation.

M.M.

INSTRUMENTAL

BRAHMS. Sixteen Waltzes, Op. 39.

HAYDN. Piano Sonatas. No. 30 in

A major: No. 35 in C major. *Variations in F minor.* Carl Seemann

(piano). D.G.G. Mono LPREM19162

(12 in., 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.:

★Stereo SLPEM136021 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Carl Seeman is a clean, able pianist, whom so far we have heard mainly in Mozart. Haydn piano sonatas have never had much of a deal from the gramophone, and these two are welcome to the LP catalogues; Seemann plays them without finding them strange and exciting (listen to Horowitz's recording of the E flat, No. 52, to see what I mean); but since his readings are elegant and shapely, the performances cannot fail to be enjoyable. The F minor Variations were composed for Barbara Ployer (recipient of Mozart's concertos K.449 and 453), and are very fine, with striking "romantic" anticipations.

I wish the whole record had been given to Haydn, even though the set of Waltzes is an attractive composition. In the words of Hanslick (to whom it is dedicated), it forms "one of those genuine works of art

which nobody notices particularly, but which delights everybody". But, for repeated hearing, the waltzes need to be played with far more imagination, with touches that delight and enchant. Seemann is at the opposite extreme from Robert Weisz (whose version of the Waltzes forms an MP on its own—Decca LW5103); where Weisz is positively coy, Seemann is honestly unaffected. It is a nice performance he gives. One would enjoy it at a recital, but can well demand something more from a recording. The sound is very good in both stereo and mono. A.P.

BACH. Trio Sonata in D minor, BWV527. Heinz Wunderlich

(organ). Cantate Mono T71876F

(7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

Recorded on the Baroque organ at the Parish Church of Borgentreich, Westphalia, Germany.

Having praised a record made by this organist on this organ rather enthusiastically last October I found the new one disappointing. Partly it is the fault of Wunderlich's registration: the first and last movements really do sound like the "bubble-and-squeak" of Vaughan Williams's dictum—the squeak being supplied by the two manual voices, and the bubble by the pedal one (a slow-speaking quintadena?). I'm all for using the full resources of a baroque instrument in music that calls for it, but Bach's trio sonatas certainly don't call for such violent tonal differentiation. However, quite apart from the registration, Heinz Wunderlich gives a rather plodding account of this limpid music, and certainly not one to be compared with Walcha's on an older Archive disc. Organ connoisseurs may want this record for its clear presentation of the instrument's authentic tone-colour, but I doubt whether it will make many converts to the cause. J.N.

CHOPIN. Waltzes, Nos. 1-14. Malczynski

(piano). Columbia Mono

33CX1685 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d.

P.T.).

Novaeas (7/55) PL8170

Lipatti (4/58) 33CX1032

Askenase (2/57) DGM19060

Rubinstein (3/56) (7/59) (R)RB16150

There have been three or four Chopin waltzes in the catalogue under Malczynski's name for some years, and now we can welcome the whole lot. This is a good record, sensitively played and quite well recorded, and it would be a treasured possession, to be welcomed unreservedly, were it not for the fact that it is up against tremendous competition. Good as it is, the Lipatti and Rubinstein discs seem to me slightly better. The Lipatti still remains one of the really great piano discs, in spite of the rather dated quality, and the Rubinstein is almost in the same class and better recorded. Often Malczynski can stand comparison with either of these predecessors, but compare No. 4 in F. His fingers make heavy weather over the difficult bits, as also the trials near the end, whereas Lipatti's and Rubinstein's seem to skim over the notes with just that little extra dexterity. But more striking is the way the three of them play the second subject with its feminine endings. Lipatti

and Rubinstein phrase these beautifully. Malczynski doesn't phrase them at all; the last note of the feminine endings is just as loud as the preceding beat. This unwillingness to phrase is evident too in the A flat Waltz, Op. 69, No. 1. Malczynski's nuances of tempo are sensitive and musically, his nuances in dynamics much less so. His tempi in the G flat, Op. 70, No. 1, led me to indulge in some mathematics with a stop watch. I am sure we play this waltz much slower than people used to do. My somewhat outmoded edition, edited by Klindworth and Scharwenka, gives metronome marks of 88 and 32 bars a minute for the main sections. (These are not, of course, Chopin's markings.) Here are some comparisons: Lipatti—76 and 44; Rubinstein—76 and 40; Askenase—52 and 44; Malczynski—64 and 36. In performance it seems that Askenase plays both sections in very nearly the same tempo, and this cannot be right. Malczynski also avoids a sudden change; sixteen bars into the first section (where it gets difficult; no innuendo intended) he suddenly drops to 54. I speak comparatively; these changes of tempo are considerable. But they are nothing to what Klindworth, Scharwenka and, I suspect, their contemporaries liked. On the other hand these editors wanted No. 13 in D flat played the slowest of all the waltzes—at 36 bars a minute. It can sound marvellous at that speed, and I am sure Chopin meant it to be slow. But no one plays it slowly nowadays. Lipatti (54) Rubinstein (50) and Askenase (52) all sound to me too fast, and I enjoyed Malczynski's much slower (though still not quite slow enough) performance at 42 bars a minute.

I have written at some length about the waltzes. Malczynski plays with some idiosyncrasy or other; it can be taken that all the others are played both more conventionally and also very well indeed. There is some pre-echo before No. 11, and quality seems a shade below par in the middle of No. 6. Elsewhere all goes well. R.F.

CHOPIN. Piano Works. Impromptu

No. 2 in F sharp major, Op. 36:

Nocturne in F sharp major, Op. 15:

No. 2: Fantaisie in F minor, Op. 49:

Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23:

Andante spianato and Grande Polonaise brillante, Op. 22. Valentin Gheorghiu (piano). H.M.V. Mono

XLP20021 (12 in., 16s. 11½d. plus

5s. 6½d. P.T.).

Valentin Gheorghiu, the Rumanian pianist now in his early thirties, has all the qualities for a good Chopin player, and this record seems to me outstanding. It begins with great restraint, for he plays the F sharp impromptu very quietly throughout except for the fortissimo climax in the march section. All those passages that are marked with one "f" in the not-very-reliable Peters edition—for instance the beginning of the march, and the demi-semiquaver section—sound soft and delicate, and the result is surprisingly convincing. Similarly in the great F minor Fantaisie, when leading up to the Lento in B major,

he keeps the tone right down for several pages, and the music in consequence seems to flow more logically. There is a sense of poetry both in the way he handles the themes and in the way he leads from one section to another. But there is plenty of power too, and with his left hand he seems at times almost to bang too much, so that the right hand gets drowned. He plays the Ballade most beautifully, commanding attention with everything that he does, and in the *Andante spianato* and *Polonaise* his playing can stand comparison with that of Rubinstein, whose performance is reviewed in this month's orchestral section. Gheorghiu has no orchestra to accompany him, but the work is none the worse without it, and though he lacks Rubinstein's heroic stature in the polonaise he gains in recording quality; Gheorghiu's piano sounds much more full-toned and realistic. And look at the price!

R.F.

LISZT. *Grandes Etudes de Paganini*, G.140, Nos. 1-6. *Années de Pelerinage*, G.161: No. 4, Petrarch Sonnet No. 47; No. 5, Petrarch Sonnet No. 104; No. 6, Petrarch Sonnet No. 123; No. 10, Tarantella. **Alfred Brendel** (piano). Vox Mono PL10800 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Brendel's fifth record devoted to Liszt includes some of the master's flights of winged virtuosity and some glorious, subtle poetry in the vein that we of today find most original and creative in his work. In the former mood there is the *Eroica* study in E flat with its cascading scales, the dazzling *Campanella*, the A minor variations on The Theme, and the *Tarantella* (which has not been available in LP form before, I think—though a performance was at one time announced on a short-lived label!); in the poetic vein there are the three wonderful Petrarch sonnets, noble, melodious, full of harmonic magic and the most heart-pierced feeling; and there is the great tremolo study which opens the Paganini collection, a sombre monumental piece of oratory that rises to a huge climax.

Alfred Brendel has shown himself, in previous records, to be superbly equipped both mentally and physically as a Liszt interpreter. He is still that here, but not blindingly so; his part-playing is both clean and beautiful in the 47th sonnet, but the rapture of No. 104 and the deep romantic emotion of the melody in No. 123 find him somewhat bland and scientific—the last two pages of this sonnet show how exquisitely he might have played the rest of this piece and its predecessor. Again the tension and poise of his playing in the first two Paganini studies are extremely fine, a combination of the clarity in Siki's performance, and the panache in Abbey Simon's; but Brendel's rhythm becomes slapdash in the later studies (*the scherzando* episode of *Campanella*, the A minor Theme and the double glissandi), and he doesn't succeed in making numbers four and five sound more interesting than I think they are (which is hardly at all). He is dull too in the *Tarantella*, a big and glossy warhorse that has substance as well as pace, but here sounds strangely long-winded.

It may be that I have expected too much of this disc, but I can't forget the way that Lipatti, and Kentner, and Curzon (to go no further) have played these pieces, nor how Brendel plays parts of the A major concerto, and the first Mephisto Waltz, and the *Lugubre Gondole*. We must still wait for a really authoritative and compelling recorded performance of the Paganini Studies, as it is; but I still look forward eagerly to Brendel's sixth and subsequent Liszt recitals, to the transcendental studies, the later Mephisto waltzes, all three *Valsesoubliées*, *Valé d'Obermann*, *Orage* and others of the Pilgrimage Diaries, and above all the great B minor sonata. And when they come, I hope the piano tone will be warm and steady; on my pressing of Vol. 5 it is very unpleasant with a pronounced wow for much of the time.

W.S.M.

LISZT. *Piano Works*. Polonaises, G.223: No. 1 in C minor†; No. 2 in E major†*. *Années de Pelerinage*, G.161, No. 7, "Dante Sonata"**. Consolations, G.17, Nos. 1-6*. **Peter Katin** (piano). Decca Mono LXT5557: ★Stereo SXL2183 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.). Items marked † previously available in Mono only on LW5116 (8/54), and those marked * in Mono only on LXT2877 (3/54).

It will be seen from the above that Peter Katin has remade his Liszt recital for stereo (the present mono and stereo discs being entirely new), and taken the opportunity to add to the programme the C minor Polonaise, a well known piece with a haunting first subject, which was previously confined to an MP disc. The new performances give him a chance to tidy some loose ends (but in one place he makes a bosh shot where he hits the bullseye before), but they are not markedly superior. Consolations 3 and 6 are beautifully played, and he brings off the great Dante Sonata with likeable impulse and warmth. The performances are all extremely capable, but not really imaginative: towards the end of the first Polonaise Liszt writes *appassionato assai*, but Katin remains unperturbed. In four of the Consolations he plays like a well-mannered and extremely promising student. Is this really the pianist who once had me jumping up and down with excitement after his performance of Rachmaninov's third concerto? The piano tone sounds rather clangorous until you remember that Katin plays a Blüthner, not the Steinway that one's ear is used to; once this is remembered, the sound is accepted. Mono is, surprisingly, richer; the stereo is rather dull and overspread.

W.S.M.

PAGANINI. *Caprices*, Op. 1: No. 24 in A minor; No. 13 in B flat major; No. 9 in E major; No. 20 in D major; No. 14 in E flat major. **Zino Francescatti** (violin), **Artur Balsam** (piano). Philips Mono ABE10160 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.).

I have not seen the sleeve of this disc, so I do not know who composed these curious piano accompaniments. Not Paganini,

who wrote his famous twenty-four Caprices for violin alone. The accompaniment is always superfluous, usually growling away in the bottom octaves, and sometimes wildly out of period. Side 1 contains two "favourites"—the one Rachmaninov wrote his "Rhapsody" on for piano and orchestra, and the B flat which Kreisler used to play (with piano, I must own) with such entrancing rubato that I simply cannot listen to this strait-jacket performance. Francescatti does not sound quite at home in these pieces. Intonation is not perfect, and surely he should have been allowed a more forward balance in this type of music.

R.F.

SCHEIDT. *Tabulatura Nova*: "Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stand". **Robert Köbler** (organ). Cantate Mono T71880F (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.). Recorded on the Heinrich-Schütz organ in Herford Cathedral.

Robert Köbler plays this very beautiful setting of *Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stand* on a much-restored eighteenth-century positive organ in Herford Cathedral, and organ-lovers will be glad to see that the specification of the instrument is given on the sleeve. Scheidt's music sounds well on an instrument as clear and easily-speaking as this one, and both performance and recording are excellent.

D.S.

MICHAEL RABIN. *Chopin*. Nocturne, Op. 27 (arr. Wilhelmj). **Wieniawski**. Caprice in A minor (arr. Kreisler). **Mompou**. Jeunes filles au jardin (arr. Szigeti). **Scriabin**. Etude in thirds (arr. Szigeti). **Debussy**. La plus que lente. **Sarasate**. Habañera: Zapateado. **Elgar**. La Capricieuse. **Engel**. Sea-Shell (arr. Zimbalist). **Ravel**. Pièce en forme de Habañera. **Prokofiev**. March from "Love of the Three Oranges" (arr. Heifetz). **Suk**. Burleska. **Michael Rabin** (violin), **Leon Pommers** (piano). Capitol Mono P8506: ★Stereo SP8506 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Michael Rabin is still in his early twenties, and the catalogue suggests that he makes a speciality of the flashier nineteenth-century concertos. Certainly there is nothing on this disc to tax the intellect, either the performer's or the listener's, and, well as these arrangements are played, I am a little surprised that the top price should be charged for such a record. This is tea-shop music *par excellence*, the sentiment laid on with the proverbial trowel, and the recording is all it should be, with the violin favoured at the expense of the piano, and I would only add in a hushed whisper that the March from *Love of the Three Oranges* arranged for fiddle and piano sounds even worse than you'd expect. But this is no criticism of Mr. Rabin who has so many virtues that I would like to hear him tackle a classical concerto. The mono recording is good, the stereo exceptionally so, with wonderfully silent surfaces and realistic violin quality. Listening to this music again, I was struck by the beauty of Mr. Rabin's playing in the Ravel *Habañera*.

R.F.

SVIATOSLAV RICHTER. Schubert.

Moment Musical in C major, D.780, No. 1. Impromptus, D.899: No. 2 in E flat major; No. 4 in A flat major.

Chopin. Etude in E major, Op. 10, No. 3. **Liszt.** Valses Oubliées: No. 1 in F sharp major; No. 2 in A flat major.

Transcendental Studies: No. 5 in B flat major, "Feux Follets"; No. 11 in D flat major, "Harmonies du Soir".

Sviatoslav Richter (piano). Philips Mono ABL3301 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Recorded during a public performance in Sofia on February 25th, 1958, through the courtesy of the Bulgarian State Radio.

This isn't actually the first disc of Sviatoslav Richter's that I've been sent for review; two years ago there was one of Bach's D minor piano concertos which I found and find admirable but hardly ever have an irresistible urge to play. I've heard several of his other records at times, but never had the opportunity to live with one. Now suddenly I have two (the other is reviewed under Schumann) and at the moment I want to go on and on playing them over and over again. Richter is capable of making every other pianist sound like a beginner.

In this Liszt-Schubert-Chopin recital, the Liszt side is the more inspiring. Richter plays the Chopin E major study at a sensible forward-moving pace (it should never be allowed to drag), but with a very ordinary rubato so that, despite his heady and extremely precise treatment of the middle section, the piece as a whole remains earth-bound. In the three Schubert pieces he plays simply, lyrically, with perfectly judged articulation and rhythm (there is a masterly example of this in the Alberti middle section of the C major *Moment Musical*), but no interpretative bias for you to like or dislike; I wasn't particularly impressed at first, but have come to find these performances extraordinarily satisfying because they are so easy to live with.

The Liszt side is another hair-raising story. It is worth stressing that Richter plays the second *Valse oubliée* as well as the first (I wish the third had been here too, and hope it may yet be). The one usually played is the first; here he begins with a gentle, very affectionate and rather whimsical rubato that lifts, but never disturbs, the rhythm; and then suddenly away he goes with the repeated-note theme and you jump out of your skin at the precision and strength and musical control of his playing. Later his gauging of the warm bass harmonies is like the relaxing beat of the sun on a Mediterranean beach (though it doesn't go on so long), and the final recitative fades away with almost intolerable pathos. The second *Valse oubliée* is a sort of caricature: it starts capriciously and rather gawkily, then moves, via a succession of double trills (Richter's evenness and controlled accents here are dazzling), into the vanishing memory of a bizarre waltz, rather old-fashioned, for three flutes and clarinet perhaps; it merges into the muffled clatter of a barrel-organ (but one now purged of all

banal or mechanical associations—a genius made it, and another is turning the handle). Later a cheeky, impish recitative accompanies a series of sighing, melancholy harmonies—Richter evokes the black despair of a nostalgic Slav whose grief is too deep for tears. An astonishing piece, realised as it deserves.

The two transcendental studies are very well known, though astonishingly not otherwise represented in the LP catalogue. However, there's no need for further worry in these two cases; superior performances will only be heard in heaven. In *Feux follets* the lightness and evenness and rhythmic vitality of Richter's playing suggest a super-Horowitz with an ethereal sensibility unmatched in my experience; I cannot decide which is more stunning, Richter's performance of this or of Schumann's *Toccata*—I have played both a dozen times in a few days and the thrill never diminishes. *Feux follets* is a *tour de force*, but *Harmonies du soir* is a grand and monumental conception, and it is played with marvellous spaciousness and poetic feeling. The rolled chords are timed and coloured with uncanny skill, and the steep diminuendo after the gigantic climax has to be heard to be believed. I am not given to Wardour Street hyperbole; believe me, I have, if anything, understressed the beauty and mastery of the playing on this record.

It was made at a public concert, and this involves bath-tap applause between items (they are scrolled), and some occasional coughs. The microphone picks up a good deal of piano action noise, and the tone itself is not ideally free. But none of these faults mask for a moment the art of Richter, who, I am inclined to suspect, is the greatest interpreter of music (pianoforte or otherwise) in the world.

W.S.M.

TOTENBERG/ROSTROPOVICH.

Bartók. Rumanian Dances. **Ravel.** Pièce en forme de Habañera: *Tzigane*.

Debussy. La plus que lente. **Kreisler.**

Plaintes d'amour. **Roman Totenberg** (violin), **Raymond David Hanson** (piano). **Chopin.** Introduction and Polonaise in C major, Op. 3. **Rachmaninov.** Vocalise. **Schubert.**

Impromptu in G flat major, D.899, No. 3. **Schumann.** Träumerei.

Mstislav Rostropovich ('cello), **Alexander Dedyukhin** (piano).

D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 479018 (12 in.,

15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

The front of the sleeve is unhelpful to a degree: "Virtuose Kammermusik" in large letters and under it the rather dubious translation, "Masterly Chambermusic". Nothing else. But is any of this "Masterly Chambermusic"? And fancy having a 'cellist like Rostropovich without putting his name on the cover! However, there is plenty to enjoy on the disc itself. Totenberg, a Polish violinist now living mostly in America, plays the Bartók dances so supremely well that I fear I misjudged him in a recent review. I have never heard such an idiomatic performance or one with so much *panache*, and I doubt if any violinist from Western Europe could hope to get

inside the music like this. However, he failed to convert me to the endless *Tzigane* of Ravel (I prefer Liszt in the bogus Hungarian idiom), and he plays the Kreisler piece much too "straight". Nevertheless his technique is enviable in the Ravel. His nearness to the microphone makes the sound a little on the shrill side, but the quality is pretty good. Rostropovich on the other side is better balanced, and here the playing is uniformly of the very highest class. The Chopin sounds quite ravishingly beautiful. Normally this piece is avoided by 'cellists because the last four pages or so are abysmally written for the instrument. Someone has cooked up a brand new 'cello part over Chopin's piano accompaniment, and done it beautifully, with the result that the whole piece positively melts in the mouth. The pianist's fingers are the least bit fumbly at the start of the polonaise, but the way he follows the 'cellist's rubato is masterly. Rostropovich plays the Rachmaninov and Schumann arrangements as delightfully as one would expect, and surprises by taking the Schubert Impromptu (which he plays in G major) very fast, and at times *furioso*. Pianists usually aim at a calm moonlight quality in this piece, with its anticipations of Liszt's third *Liebestraum*; Rostropovich makes it surprisingly exciting, and right or wrong it comes off like one o'clock. In short this is a very enjoyable disc, and excellent value for money.

R.F.

CHORAL AND SONG

BACH. Cantata No. 187, "Es wartet alles auf dich". **Ingeborg Reichelt** (soprano), **Lotte Wolf - Matthäus** (contralto), **Hans-Olaf Hudemann** (bass), **Wilhelm Cremer** (oboe), **Göttinger Stadtkantorei** and **Frankfurter Kantaten-Orchestra** led by **Ludwig Doermann**. Cantate Mono T72019L (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 7s. 3d. P.T.).

This Cantata, *There waiteth all things on Thee*, which the latest research dates 1726 not 1732, is one of three cantatas composed for the seventh Sunday after Trinity, when the gospel was St. Mark's account of Christ's feeding of the four thousand. This provides the basis of the text, with allusions from the psalms, and a text from St. Matthew on the abundance God gives to man and his need not to be troubled about food, drink or clothing. (The use man has made of this plenty is, however, avoided.) All the numbers in the Cantata, except the recitations and the concluding chorale, were later used by Bach in his Mass in G minor, a work as yet unknown to the catalogues. Whittaker, in his great and recently published book on all the cantatas sacred and secular, speaks of the opening chorus, with its chief theme in canon, as "a harvest song", and sees, in the orchestral part, the waving of corn (oboes) and the movement of a sickle (upper strings): an interpretation that may well seem altogether too fanciful. This fine chorus ends with a joyous fugue. The alto aria, with oboe doubling first violin throughout, is simple

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and tuneful, with some "echo" effects. The bass aria, with the unaltered text from St. Matthew, "Be therefore never troubled, nor say ye, wherewith shall we feed us?" etc., with accompaniment for violins in unison and continuo (organ), is also simply set. One would have expected Bach to treat it as an arioso rather than as an aria. The soprano aria, with oboe solo and continuo accompaniment, is, on the other hand, quite elaborate, a song of thanksgiving with florid passages for voice and oboe, and a change of time and speed at the words "Hence repining", with staccato phrases for the oboe indicating lightness of heart.

The recording gives an excellent balance between the parts, and the choral and solo singing is very good. I particularly liked Lotte Wolf-Mathäus, the contralto, and Hans-Olaf Hudemann, the bass. Ingeborg Reichelt is perhaps a little "breathy" in her aria, but in general this is a first-rate and intimate performance of the charming work.

A.R.

BACH, JOHANN CHRISTOPH. Motet, "Ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest mich denn".

BACH, JOHANN SEBASTIAN. Choral Motet, "Unser Leben ist ein Schatten". Zurich Bach Choir, Hans Andreas (harpsichord), Heinrich Funk (positive organ), Robert Hunziber ('cello), Kurt Brüggemann (double bass), led by Bernhard Henking. Cantate Mono T72097F (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

The Zurich Bach Choir has good boy trebles, and the men are capable singers too; they are conducted by Bernard Henking, who makes the most of the vivid pictorial possibilities of Bach's *Unser Leben ist ein Schatten*. Johann Christoph Bach's fine motet receives less sympathetic treatment, for there is not much attempt to let the forward harmonic rhythm take command of the situation as it should. The continuo support is good.

D.S.

DAVID. German Mass, Op. 42: Kyrie; Gloria in excelsis; Credo; Sanctus; Agnus Dei.

WENZEL. Mass, "Komm Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott": Nicene Creed. Choir of the School of Church Music, Halle conducted by Eberhard Wenzel. Cantate Mono T72066L (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 7s. 3d. P.T.).

It's strange to think that whereas, in the Middle Ages, the Church was in the vanguard of musical progress, today ecclesiastical composers look back to the past. Not one of them has been able to turn to account the new techniques of Schoenberg, Webern, and Stravinsky (though perhaps Stravinsky's *Canticum Sacrum* and *Threni* are portents). Germany and Austria, like England and France, have a whole host of church composers who write in a kind of modern-medieval style—taking plainchants or old hymns and harmonising them mainly in bare fourths and fifths, with a few of the milder twentieth-century dissonances to give a little edge.

To these belong the two men represented on this disc—the sixty-five-year-old Austrian composer, Johann Nepomuk David, and the conductor of the Choir of the Halle School of Church Music, Eberhard Wenzel, who is David's junior by one year. David's work is a setting of the Ordinary of the Mass (*Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei*) in German paraphrases dating from the Reformation, and each movement is based on a hymn-tune from the same period (two of them by Luther). The composition by Wenzel is setting of the Nicene Creed in German, entirely to music of his own conceiving. As functional music for the church, they are both appropriately pure, simple and dignified (though the squelchy chord at the end of David's *Sanctus* strikes an unfortunate note), and they will no doubt appeal to church musicians; but, considered independently, they have little intrinsic musical interest.

The performances are honest, straightforward ones, without any particular sensitivity; the boys cannot compare with those in the best English cathedral choirs for purity of tone and flexibility of phrasing. The recording is not as clear as it might be, even allowing for the church acoustic, and one or two of the climaxes jar a little.

D.C.

DVORAK. Love Songs, Op. 83. Milada Musilova (soprano), Beno Blachut (tenor), Alfred Holecek (piano). Gypsy Melodies, Op. 55. Vaclav Bednar (baritone), Alfred Holecek (piano). Supraphon Mono LP398 (10 in., 14s. 9d. plus 4s. 9d. P.T.).

Gypsy Melodies: Lichtenegg, Hauseslein (5/55) LW5146

The *Love Songs*, Op. 33, are revisions of eight numbers of the cycle of eighteen songs called *The Cypresses* which Dvořák composed in 1865 as a result of falling in love with Anna Černák, who came to him for piano lessons. His love was not reciprocated, hence the choice of Gustav Pfleger's melancholy and sentimental poems in which the cypress trees are symbolic of grief and death. Dvořák revised others of the songs, used one of the melodies in one of his operas, another in a piano piece, and scored twelve of them for string quartet under the title "Evening Songs". His affection for these songs was not misplaced. They are most melodious, and beautifully written for the voice, and on this disc they are very well sung indeed by Musilova and Blachut. Both keep a good vocal line and interpret the songs with great feeling. Blachut's *mezzo voce* is simply exquisite—he rarely uses tone louder than *mf*—and if he has recorded other Czech songs of Dvořák or Smetana, I hope Supraphon will issue them here.

It is very foolish to have devoted the sleeve note to accounts of these two cycles without alluding to any of the songs at all—and no titles appear on the label! I feel bound therefore to give the titles (in English) of *Love Songs*, which few readers will know.

1. Never will love leave us. 2. Death reigns in many a human breast. 3. I wander oft past yonder house. 4. I know that on my love is thee. 5. Nature lies peaceful. 6. In deepest forest glade I stand. 7. When thy sweet glances on me fall. 8. Thou only dear one. (Blachut sings Nos. 3, 6-8; Musilova the rest.)

It is good to have the *Gypsy Songs* sung in Czech and not German or English, but Václav Bednář's performance cannot be recommended. There is a fearsome wobble in the middle of his voice, his phrases are often broken, and he sounds altogether too elderly for these songs.

Alfred Holecek's playing, crisp and vividly rhythmical, is admirable and he is equally good in the quiet *Love Songs*, in which he has singers worthy of him to accompany. Balance and recording are good and I liked the imaginative cover design.

A.R.

DISTLER. Motet, "Singet dem Herren ein Neues Lied".

KAMINSKI. Motet, "Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr". Windsbacher Children's Choir directed by Hans Thamm. Cantate Mono T71690F (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

Two "neo-baroque" motets by German composers of the first half of the twentieth century who deliberately stood aside from the mainstream of music in their own time and sought their musical salvation elsewhere. Hugo Distler was born in 1908 and committed suicide under the Nazi régime in 1942; D.G.G. have issued extensive excerpts from his choral settings of Mörike, which may be familiar to English music-lovers. Heinrich Kaminski was born more than twenty years earlier, and died just after the war at the remote village of Ried, in Bavaria, where he had spent much of his life. So little of his music has found a place in our concert-halls, or in the programmes of our choral groups, that it is difficult to make any generalisations about it. On the strength of this little piece it is difficult to believe that Kaminski was an artistic personality great enough to take up an isolated individual stance and not suffer for it. This record, in fact, will appeal more to those who enjoy the sound of well-trained (and well recorded) children's voices than to those who are interested in twentieth-century music.

J.N.

HANDEL. Acis and Galatea. Joan Sutherland (soprano), Peter Pears (tenor) David Galliver (tenor), Owen Brannigan (bass), St. Anthony Singers, Philomusics of London conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. London L'Oiseau-Lyre Mono OL50179-80: ★Stereo SOL60011-2 (two 12 in., 57s. 6d. plus 18s. 9d. P.T.).

Acis and Galatea, Handel's first dramatic work in his adopted language, has until now been represented in the LP catalogue by only four arias and a chorus. This recording presents the work in its original one-act form, except for the fact that a few cuts are made in the *da capo* arias and the chorus "Happy we" (added in 1739 for the two-act version) is incorporated immediately after Galatea's aria "As when the dove". Handel's masque was written when he was in the service of the Duke of Chandos, whose country seat was at Cannons, near Edgware; the present recording was made a little farther out, at Watford, whose Town Hall has an admirable acoustic.

Although *Acis* has always been a popular

E

work, and probably received more performances than any of Handel's other stage works during his lifetime, it suffered in the way that popular works do, for there were innumerable changes in the order and type of individual numbers and even transpositions and re-scoring. Handel's only sure method of protecting his copyright, which was frequently and flagrantly infringed, was to put on a better (or at least noticeably different) performance at a rival theatre. Thus, in May, 1732, Arne's company staged *Acis* at the New Theatre in the Haymarket, and Handel was obliged to counter in June with a production at the King's Theatre. For this he went back to the music of his own Italian serenata on the same subject, and drew also upon other cantatas and operas to such an extent that the performance must have lasted half as long again as the neat, trim little masque with which we are now concerned.

The story of the masque is a simple pastoral based on Ovid, and the libretto (later discovered to be the patchwork of John Gay of *Beggar's Opera* fame) made considerable use of previous poetry by Dryden, Hughes, and Pope. A chorus sets the scene—"a rural prospect, diversified with rocks, groves, and a river"—and Galatea, her desire awakened by bird-song, decides to seek her shepherd swain Acis. Damon, shepherd friend of Acis, David Galliver provides adequate contrast in vocal colour (so very essential in an unseen performance) and shapes Handel's often florid lines with great skill and artistry. His interpretation of "Would you gain the tender creature" makes the most of the operative, expressive words of this beautiful aria. Owen Brannigan, an amiable Polyphemus and a past master at the merry back-slapping of "O ruddier than the cherry", ejaculates his furious comments with telling effect into the fugato *Liebestod* of the two lovers. Julian Herbage, in a brief note, points out the oddly incongruous use of a sopranino recorder for the giant's "hundred reeds of decent growth", but reminds us that early performances featured the flageolet, and that there may well have been a link with Handel's own performances. Whether it was Handel or some astute stage-manager who first thought of having a giant tootle so high above the treble stave may never be known, but if you happen to be among those who don't believe it you can play the last band of side 4 and hear "O ruddier than the cherry" with a "flauto", that is, a treble recorder.

This was just the kind of story to appeal to Handel's musical and dramatic imagination, and although he may have had no more than a dozen musicians at Cannons—five single voices for the chorus, two oboes (doubling recorders), two violins, two 'cellos and harpsichord—the degree of vivid and colourful portrayal is amazing. It may be a generalisation to say that Handel could achieve sublime effects by simple means, but *Acis* proves this time and time again. The cast selected for this recording is excellent, and each of the four principal singers possesses a telling dramatic style

as well as a fine command of phrasing and timbre.

Joan Sutherland is a perfect Galatea; her voice conveys magisterially that somewhat difficult ideal—not a simple country girl, but an eighteenth-century actress playing in a slightly sophisticated manner at being what she knows perfectly well she is not. Her singing of "Hush the pretty warbling choir" and "As when the dove" puts her on a pedestal of classic elegance, and even the short recitatives are given with due regard for their place in the scheme as a whole. Winton Dean finds this "formal regularity" of the masque its only discoverable blemish, but I have a feeling that hundreds of ardent Handelians will gladly overlook it and offer up their thanks for the fine performances of Joan Sutherland and Peter Pears. As Acis, Pears brings something of the same combination of qualities already enumerated in connection with the heroine; his gentle roulades in "Love in her eyes sits playing", his brisk and valiant prowess in "Love sounds th' alarm", and his sad and touching demise (when even the friendly sound of the harpsichord is suppressed by Handel's own command) leave the listener in no doubt about the high quality of his portrayal of an endearing character.

As Damon, shepherd friend of Acis, David Galliver provides adequate contrast in vocal colour (so very essential in an unseen performance) and shapes Handel's often florid lines with great skill and artistry. His interpretation of "Would you gain the tender creature" makes the most of the operative, expressive words of this beautiful aria. Owen Brannigan, an amiable Polyphemus and a past master at the merry back-slapping of "O ruddier than the cherry", ejaculates his furious comments with telling effect into the fugato *Liebestod* of the two lovers. Julian Herbage, in a brief note, points out the oddly incongruous use of a sopranino recorder for the giant's "hundred reeds of decent growth", but reminds us that early performances featured the flageolet, and that there may well have been a link with Handel's own performances. Whether it was Handel or some astute stage-manager who first thought of having a giant tootle so high above the treble stave may never be known, but if you happen to be among those who don't believe it you can play the last band of side 4 and hear "O ruddier than the cherry" with a "flauto", that is, a treble recorder.

The composition of the chorus is slightly unusual in that there are sopranos, three tenors, and basses—no altos. The St. Anthony Singers sound excellent, and their words are always clear, but now and again an individual tenor voice seems to stand out from the main body of singers. This might have been corrected by a different microphone (or tenor) placing. Sir Adrian Boult and the Philomusica deal with Handel's score in an altogether admirable manner, for there is crisp and incisive playing when it is needed, and pathos rich in sonority where the score and the sentiment demand it. I preferred the sound of the stereo version, which seems to me far and away superior to the mono. D.S.

HAYDN. *St. Cecilia Mass.* Maria Stader (soprano), Marga Höfgen (contralto), Richard Holm (tenor), Josef Greindl (bass), Bavarian Radio Chorus.

HANDEL. *Organ Concerto in F major, Op. 4, No. 4.* Michael Schneider (organ). Both with *Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra* conducted by Eugen Jochum. D.G.G. Mono LPM18545-6: ★ Stereo SLPM138028-9 (two 12 in., 60s. plus 19s. 6d. P.T.).

Haydn wrote this mass about 1773 or 1774 for the Congregation of St. Cecilia in Vienna, and the association with music's patron saint led him to produce what is the longest and most elaborate of all his masses.

I cannot really feel that it is the greatest, but if there are moments, particularly in the coloratura soprano arias and in the fugal choruses, when Haydn seems to be falling back on conventional formulae in the *St. Cecilia Mass*, there are plenty of strokes of sheer genius. The deeply expressive instrumental postludes to each of the invocations in the "Qui tollis" section of the *Gloria*, for example, or the thrilling quiet opening of the *Sanctus*, and above all the *Benedictus*. In fact in this generally sumptuous work it is the quiet and reflective moments that strike one as the most moving and deeply felt. Jochum seems to me to understand this very well. He makes no attempt to dramatise these sections, but lets them make their own effect with beautifully well-judged and unassertive playing. The orchestral playing throughout this issue is a joy, increased by the excellent recorded balance which really lets us hear how good it is; I never remember hearing the blend of oboe and violin tone so precisely reproduced. And while we are on the subject of the recording I should add that it is on the whole exceptionally good in both stereo and mono versions, giving us very much the sensation of listening to the work in a large concert hall, with the chorus spread above and beyond the orchestra. It is arguable that the recording might have done more to suggest the acoustics of a church, but of course this would have meant some loss of detail (the chorus's words are conspicuously clear), and in any case this is basically a concert-mass rather than a liturgical one, if the distinction can be allowed. My one reservation concerns the soloists: I would have preferred to have them set a little further back, instead of being (as of course they would be in most concert performances) separated from the chorus by the width of the orchestra.

Of the four soloists, it is the two high voices who emerge best from the formidable demands Haydn makes of them. Maria Stader, as we well know, has no need to fear the technical hurdles, yet even she has a tense moment or two. No matter, though. her trumpet-like brilliance is admirably suited to the character of the music. Haydn has given the soprano in his mass—the *Quoniam*, for example, with its distinctly military accompaniment. Of all the soloists, however, I think it is Richard Holm who gave me the most pleasure, with his splendidly fresh-sounding tenor. He may not be able to cope quite effortlessly with

some of his coloratura, but he sings the beginning of "Et incarnatus" and the "theological" clauses that begin with "Et in spiritum sanctum" with something very like charm. Neither Höfgen nor Greindl, good Wagnerian singers as they both are, is ideally cast in this music. Like so many low voices, they seem to have cultivated roundness of tone at the expense of clear focus, and Greindl, in particular, is often forced to scoop to his high notes. The *Crucifixus*, which is a duet for alto and bass, seems to me one of the very few sections of the whole performance that does not quite come off.

The Handel organ concerto is a very substantial fill-up, and is by far the best example I know on record of what a modern organ should be able to sound like. It clearly is a modern instrument and the clarity and roundness of the sound is absolutely astonishing. Unfortunately, we are not told which instrument it is. Michael Schneider plays with breathtaking accuracy.

J.N.

LOEWE. Ballades. Tom der Reimer†: Heinrich der Vogler*: Der heilige Franziskus: Der Nock*: Edward: Die Uhr†: Prinz Eugen*: Spirito Saneto: Archibald Douglas. **Josef Greindl** (bass), **Hertha Klust** (piano). D.G.G. Heliodor Mono LPX29258 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.). Items marked † and * previously available on EPL30208 (1/58) and EPL30207 (3/59) respectively.

Tom the Rhymers is a bewitching song; and Josef Greindl's EP disc that contained it and *The Clock* was a hit-record of 1958 (at any rate with everyone I played it to). I am very fond of Loewe. A song like *The Clock*, which possibly seems too cosy altogether when one first makes its acquaintance, grows on one until it becomes very moving. *The Water Sprite* is another touching song. Greindl's LP recital comprises the two EPs already reviewed, and four new songs—about 20 minutes of new material, for *Archibald Douglas* is a long ballad. Bad marks to D.G.G. for not making the slightest effort to explain what the songs are about. In fact this record can hardly have the success it deserves in England until a booklet of texts and translations is provided. (As a stop-gap, listeners should buy Decca's sixpenny booklet provided to go with Strienz's Loewe recital; there are five of the texts, with fairly accurate translations.)

Greindl sings these songs with a delicacy and imaginative insight that may surprise those who have heard him only in opera. For once, we do not tire of hearing a whole recital in the bass register, since the tone is consistently beautiful, well varied and cleanly focused. One drawback only, that unsteadiness sometimes sets in when Greindl presses on sustained notes. But though this distresses the listener from time to time, it should not be a deterrent from buying the record. Greindl's art is well illustrated in the last strophe of *Prinz Eugen, der edle Ritter*: in the way that his tone suddenly suggests a full-throated chorus, and then in the sly humour that he brings to the last three lines. The recording is good.

A.P.

NEUMARK. Sacred Songs. Schau, mein allerliebster Gott: Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten. **Paul Gümmer** (bass), **Ferdinand Conrad, Hans-Wilhelm Köneke** (recorders), **Karl Heinrich von Stumpf, Barbara Boehr** (violins), **Werner Immelmann** (harpsichord), **Georg Bleyer** (viola da gamba), **Horst Stühr** (double bass). Cantate Mono T71682F (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

Georg Neumark lived from 1621 until 1681, carrying on Heinrich Albert's tradition of sacred song in Germany without, however, rising to any great heights. His *Geistliche Arien*, published in 1675, have so far not been represented on records, but here are two of them sung by a capable though somewhat dull bass, Paul Gümmer. If the singing lacks subtlety, so does the playing, which tends to lumpiness in phrasing and heaviness in rhythm. The two recorder-players, however, are quite good, and the harpsichord is adequately handled. One considerable disadvantage is the somewhat fuzzy acoustic of the School of Church Music, Hanover, which obscures some of the words as well as the part-writing.

D.S.

PERGOLESI. Stabat Mater. **Teresa Stich-Randall** (soprano), **Elizabeth Höngen** (contralto), **Anton Heiller** (organ), **Vienna Academy Chamber Choir, Vienna State Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Mario Rossi**. Top Rank Mono 40/001 (12 in., 30s. 2½d. plus 9s. 9½d. P.T.).

Kehr (11/56) PL9000

Gorvin (7/58) APM14008

Unlike Vox and D.G.G. the cantata is performed by choir as well as soloists; authenticity says that this is a chamber devotional work for two soloists alone (almost certainly two castrati), but modern commonsense answers that if you have a small female chorus handy it is beneficial to do as Mario Rossi does and assign the two hefty fugal numbers, *Fac ut ardeat* and *Amen*, to them, since this benefits structure as well as texture—they close the first and second halves of the setting.

I mentioned castrati as probable soloists and so implied ringing, firm, virtuoso voices. But the *Stabat Mater* is about the anguish of Our Lord's mother as she watched Him dying on the cross; and Pergolesi's music is richly emotional in the late baroque manner, so that we may think it positively advantageous to hear female soloists with feminine voices. The Archive set provided well for this preference, with Margot Guilleaume and (slightly less musically) Jeanne Deroubaix. Top Rank (stemming from a Vanguard issue) gives us a sort of compromise. Stich-Randall has a superb florid technique, but her style of singing is a cross between Deller at his most feline and Schwarzkopf or Seefried in their bad old cooing manner; she croons so softly and exquisitely into the mike that legato and the brazen castrato timbre are quite forgotten—sometimes, in *Quis est homo*, it sounds like touch and go whether the notes are going to materialize at all, though they always do, and the

effect is often poignant. Höngen is one of the great altos of our day, but you probably don't connect her with eighteenth-century Italianate music. Her vocal quality is very generous, in fact the tone spreads expansively round the notes. She is obviously at pains to focus and refine it, and for much of the time the singing is beautiful, but equally obviously the style is not home ground to her as it is to Stich-Randall, and her trills are sheer optimism.

Mario Rossi sets good tempi; I found him most successful of all in the alto aria *Quae moerebat*, where he avoids the element of joy in the music which Pergolesi so enigmatically set to such sorrowful words. On the other hand Rossi obtains much less polished string playing than either of his rivals, and his organ continuo often ignores its *raison d'être* which is to fill in missing harmony notes. Rossi, by the way, doesn't use the same performing edition as Vox and Archive who both follow the autograph as edited by Alfred Einstein; in this month's performance many of the dynamics are ignored, some of the notes and note-values are different, and there are several variants in text and underlay (probably the work of the singers, these last). I give this warning in case you buy the record and want to follow the music with the miniature score (published by Eulenberg); they don't tally. Here I should amend a suggestion made in July 1958, when I compared the two other sets and discussed the music at some length: the theory that the last number was composed by Leonardo Leo, after Pergolesi's death, was disproved by Einstein on examination of Pergolesi's manuscript.

Weighing the pros and cons the conclusion is reached that this version does not displace the other two, and that is what my ear says also. On playing Vox and Archive again I arrived at a slight preference for the balance of the Archive performance; the organ continuo is audible, and the voices blend best of all with one another and with the instruments. Neither of the other sets is actually unpleasant, and the main thing is to acquire one of the three if you love eighteenth-century vocal music (which means *Messiah* and the *St. Matthew Passion* after all), because Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, despite the strictures of great scholars in the past, is filled with beautiful and moving music and should form part of a serious record collection.

W.S.M.

MORGENLIEDER. Three Hymns. **Gott des Himmels und der Erden**: All Morgen ist ganz frisch und neu: *Die helle Sonn leucht jetzt herfür*. **Westphalian Choir School** conducted by **Wilhelm Ehmann, Arno Schönstedt** (positive organ). Cantate Mono T71678N (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

The Westphalian Choir School sing these morning hymns with fresh and unaffected tone and a good sense of ensemble, though occasionally final consonants are not together. Old and new settings of the verses are happily and artistically combined in *Gott des Himmels und der Erden*, which draws on music by Heinrich

Albert (1604-1651) and Johannes Koch (b. 1918), and in *Die helle Sonn leucht jetzt herfür*, with Melchior Vulpius (1560-1615) and Hugo Distler (1908-1942) sharing the load. Though recorded in a nice acoustic, my disc had patches of poor surface, and the total music timing is only 8 mins. 10 secs., which seems rather on the short side. D.S.

PURCELL. *Songs and Anthems.* O I'm sick of Life: In the black dismal dungeon: Since God so tender a regard: O Lord our Governor: My beloved spake (Verse Anthem from "The Song of Solomon", Book II, vv. 10-13, 16); Saul and the Witch of Endor (from "In Guilty Night", Samuel, Book I, Chapter 28, vv. 8-20): Let mine eyes run down (Verse Anthem from Jeremiah, Chapter 14, vv. 17-22): Sleep, Adam, Sleep (from "Choice Ayres and Songs"): O Praise God in His Holiness. **Wilfred Brown, Edgar Fleet, Richard Lewis** (tenors), **Richard Standen** (bass), **Elsie Morison, Heather Harper** (sopranos), **John Whitworth** (counter-tenor), **John Carol Case** (baritone), **Ambrosian Singers** and **Goldsbrough Orchestra** (Leader: Emanuel Hurwitz) conducted by **Arnold Goldsbrough** with **Terence Weil** ('cello continuo), **Arnold Goldsbrough** (harpsichord continuo) and **Hubert Dawkes** (organ). H.M.V. Mono ALP1766 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Recorded under the auspices of the British Council.

This record is very welcome as a reminder of the tercentenary tributes that were paid so profusely to Purcell last year. All the music it contains is in some sense "sacred", though that does not necessarily mean that it was designed to be sung in church; in fact most of it would better be described as "sacred chamber-music" or "devout recreation". Now I suppose it might be objected that Purcell's genius, in tune with the temper of his age, was essentially a secular one. I think this is true, for in the latter part of his life Purcell composed less and less music for the church, and turned his attention increasingly towards the stage. Yet there was a streak of genuine religious feeling in him which enabled him, as a young man, to turn the traditions of English church music to new effect with great success. And since this is an aspect of his genius that is particularly ill-represented on gramophone records, I am very glad to see at least these few pieces made available.

The three earliest are *O, I'm sick of life, Since God so tender a regard*, and *O Lord our Governor*, and in these we can at once hear the authentic strangeness and sensuousness of Purcell's music. These are "hymns" for three or four voices with continuo. I would have thought myself that a harpsichord would be more suitable than an organ—or at least a chamber-organ with roughly the authentic tone-colour of Purcell's day; the instrument used here is clearly a conventional English church-organ, and to my mind its use robs these pieces of much of their peculiar intimacy. Moreover, Golds-

brough keeps the tempo moving forward too briskly to let the words make their full effect.

Of the three large-scale anthems *Let mine eyes run down* is for verse soloists and chorus with organ continuo. It is a wonderful example (though written when Purcell was still only in his early twenties) of his most sensuously lamenting vein—the culmination of a tradition that goes right back to Byrd and Tallis. *O praise God* and *My beloved spake* both make use of the string band that Charles II installed in his Chapel Royal after the French model, and their style is correspondingly brisker. Whether it should be quite as brisk as this I rather doubt. I am all for emphasising the connection between dance-music and church-music at this period, but some of these tempi seem to be too fast even for dancing, and they are certainly too fast for comfortable singing.

The most indisputable masterpiece on the disc is *In guilty night*, the dramatic scena between Saul, the witch of Endor and Samuel's ghost. If there were any other version available on records I should feel tempted to take exception once more to the fat organ continuo and to the too rigid tempo, but these fade into insignificance beside the power of the music itself. In fact the only reason why it is necessary to mention these points is not to discourage people from buying the record (far from it) so much as to warn them what to make allowance for in listening. The singers on this disc are all experienced in Purcell's music, and do not call for individual mention.

The recording is adequate, though my test-pressing produced a certain amount of distortion and there was a marked change of focus at the Witch's first entry in *In guilty night*. But for all its faults this is a record that no lover of Purcell can afford to miss, and one which may well show them a new aspect of his genius. J.N.

SCHUBERT. *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen.* D.965. **Erna Spoorenberg** (soprano), **Jolle Huckriede** (clarinet), **Hague Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Willem van Otterloo**. Philips Mono SBF218 (7 in., 5s. 3d. plus 1s. 8d. P.T.). Streich, Geuser, Rauchisen (5/58) EPL30288

Schubert's last song seems to be just too long for an EP side, so it must either be broken (as in the two discs listed above) or put on an LP with other things (as in Margaret Ritchie's recital—H.M.V. DLP 1121—of Schubert and Haydn). The Philips is much cheaper than the D.G.G.—"ordinary" as against EP price, and Erna Spoorenberg has a clear, sweet voice which loses quality only at the very top. But one cannot recommend a *Shepherd on the Rock* which has orchestrated accompaniment. The voice enters, for each verse, over repeated horn chords—something quite different in effect from the unobtrusive "get-ready" piano triplets. And the anonymous orchestrator has composed in some flute imitations echoing the clarinet obbligato. I think the Streich version far from ideal; there are some really beautiful

things in it, though, especially in the G-minor middle section. It is preferable to this. But why do not H.M.V. either put Miss Ritchie's version on to 45, or reissue Elisabeth Schumann's recording (perhaps in the "Music You Love" series)? Or both. A.P.

SCHUBERT. *Schiller Lieder.* Gruppe aus dem *Tartarus*, D.583: *Die Götter Griechenlands*, D.677: *Die Erwartung*, D.159: *Sehnsucht*, D.636: *Der Taucher*, D.111. **Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau** (baritone), **Karl Engel** (piano). H.M.V. Mono ALP1767 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Group from Tartarus is one of Schubert's finest songs and by far the best of his settings of Schiller's poetry. It might have been a good thing if William Mann, who provides the excellent sleeve notes and, in a leaflet issued with the disc, translations of the poems opposite the German texts, had explained for the benefit of those unfamiliar with Greek mythology that *Tartarus*, in the *Iliad* is "a place beneath the earth, reserved for the rebel Titans, as far below Hades as Heaven is above the earth". It is in this dreadful region that the Titans endlessly lament.

Their wailing is vividly depicted in the chromatic tremolos of the piano part in the first part of the song, which are wrenches from key to key. In the middle section Schubert as vividly depicts their anguish and despair in remarkable harmonisation, and then moves into an ironically triumphant C major at the words "Eternity still circles over their heads and breaks old Saturn's scythe in two". There is no term to their punishment but Schubert ends the song with a superbly imaginative stroke: a soft chord, after three silent beats, of C minor as if expressing a personal sympathy in the Titans' fate.

The dramatic impact of the song, splendidly sung by Fischer-Dieskau, is weakened by the lack of force and tension in the piano part, due in part to the pianist and to an imperfect balance between voice and piano.

The Grecian gods, one stanza of a long poem, is a lament for a lost world of beauty. Schubert later used the theme of the accompaniment, with its alternations of major and minor, in the Minuet and Trio of his A minor string quartet. The pianist fails to give a soft radiance to the major sections that answer the poignant cry "Lovely world, where are you?", words into which Fischer-Dieskau puts a wealth of meaning, and which he sings, in the last bars, with a whispered regret that is most moving. *Longing* is a pleasant song, but no more, and one can only wonder what induced Fischer-Dieskau to record *Waiting* and *The Diver*. The first of these songs is, in fact, a cantata, alternating recitative with arioso, and covering ten pages of vocal score; the other is an operatic scene, (it was orchestrated by Schubert's brother Ferdinand in 1836) which covers no less than twenty-five pages and occupies the entire second side of the disc. Schubert made four attempts at setting this poem,

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the last of which he completed in August, 1814, two months before his immortal setting of *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel*: *Waiting* was composed a year later. It is, of course, amazing how a boy still in his teens could keep going over such large canvases as he did, and here and there are good things. But these elephantine songs soon became wearisome listening in spite of all Fischer-Dieskau's art in presenting them. They remain "objects of historical interest", and no more. A.R.

SWEELINCK. Psalms. No. 6, *Ne veuilles pas, O Sire*: No. 116, *J'ai mon Dieu*: No. 123, *A toy, O Dieu*. **Vocal Ensemble (N.R.C.V.), Hilversum**, led by **Marinus Voorberg**. Cantate Mono T71881F (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.).

This Dutch ensemble sings well in tune, but without much contrast in tone-colour or dynamics, and I was not too impressed by their French. The surface of my disc was unacceptable in certain places on side 1.

D.S.

WOLF. Goethe Lieder. *Mignon I*: *Mignon II*: *Mignon III*: *Philine*: *Mignon (Kennst du das Land)*: *Ganymed*: *Anacreon's Grab*: *Die Spröde*: *Die Bekehrte*: *Blumengrass*: *Gleich und Gleich*: *Frühling übers Jahr*: *St. Nepomuks Vorabend*: *Epiphanias*. **Elisabeth Schwarzkopf** (soprano), **Gerald Moore** (piano). Columbia Mono 33CX1657 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

This is an offering truly worthy of the Wolf centenary. The four *Mignon* songs—like those of the Harper which Fischer-Dieskau and Gerald Moore included in the Wolf recital on H.M.V. ALP1143—call for interpretative gifts of the highest order in singer and pianist to bring out not only their poignance but the psychological insight of settings, which in this respect at least, surpass those by Schubert and Schumann, or anyone else. Such gifts, as we know, are possessed by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Gerald Moore and they have indeed made a most memorable disc, and one that is very well recorded. William Mann's admirable translations of the poems, contained—as in the Schiller recital reviewed above—in a leaflet with the German texts, enables the listener who wishes fully to appreciate the songs to study the poems first of all. It was often, by the way, a habit of Wolf's to read the poems—and he was a wonderful poetry reader—to the audience at a recital before his settings were sung.

As Mr. Mann says in his sleeve note, "the harp-player—who turns out to be Mignon's long-lost father—and Mignon, unattached to the world, hardly belonging to its face, move like ghosts (in Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister*) through an artificial *milieu* of theatrical folk and noble society, and their songs voice the expression of a dark mysterious world that is all the more impressive in the context". Mignon had been stolen from her Italian home in early childhood and turned into a tight-rope walker in a circus, out of which Wilhelm

buys the ill-treated waif. The last two lines of her third song "So lastt mich scheinen, bis ich werde" afford a clue to her complex character. "With grieving I grew old too early: make me for ever young again". She is indeed a child old beyond her years, aged by loneliness, suffering and longing for home, bound to secrecy and haunted by fate. Small wonder, therefore, that these songs call for the special insight in their interpreters that we fortunately have here. There are innumerable subtleties of vocal and instrumental colour and expression in these wonderful performances that I cannot begin to describe in any detail. One may mention Gerald Moore's playing of, for example, the two chords at the start of the first song "Heiss mich nicht reden" ("Bid me not speak") which are perfectly judged to convey the fateful feeling of the song: the finely matched pathos in voice and piano—they begin with the same melody—in the performance of "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt" ("Only he who knows longing, knows what I suffer")—usually, but incorrectly translated, "None but the lonely heart") the intense poignance of the last line of "So lastt mich scheinen", as Schwarzkopf sings it, "Make me ever young again", which would draw tears from a heart of stone. This is the song that Mignon sings dressed in angel's clothes to distribute birthday presents to some children—Mr. Mann writes about it at length, and it needs a full explanation—and Schwarzkopf's childlike tone is exactly in character with the song.

These artists' performance of "Kennst du das Land" converted me to a setting I used to feel too elaborate. The sudden outburst on the piano, as Mr. Moore plays it, wonderfully realises the passionate nostalgia of the poem—Mignon's longing for her native land—an outburst quietly responded to by the singer until the cry of "Thither, thither, I long to go with you, my beloved", which Schwarzkopf makes most moving.

The sensual and frivolous Philine, one of the troupe of strolling players with whom Wilhelm throws in his lot for a time, is splendidly characterised in the engaging song in which Wolf depicts her, and which makes such a strong contrast with the three *Mignon* songs that precede it.

We move into a changed world with *Ganymed*, the most handsome of all men, who longs to embrace Nature and is taken up in a cloud to heaven by Zeus to become cup-bearer to the gods. Mr. Moore's radiantly played piano part, the way Schwarzkopf suggests Ganymed vanishing upwards, make this song a thing of intense beauty. *Anacreon's Grab* is another lovely performance. I have often heard Gerald Moore accompany the song but, I think, he has never before put such tenderness into the repetition of the opening bars before the second verse when the singer has realised whose the grave is. Schwarzkopf, for her part, conveys the full beauty of the memorable phrase "Es ist Anacreon's Ruh", and sings the phrase just before that with the repose it requires.

The performances of the remaining songs are of the same superlative standard, and I particularly enjoyed *St. Nepomuk's Eve* (the Bohemian Saint who was martyred for refusing to break the seal of the Confessional) in which the piano part depicts the stars that illuminate his statues on the bridges of Prague, and *Epiphanias*, a humorous song about the three wise men, whom Wolf and his brothers had impersonated as children, a song which later in life he wrote for the children of his great friend Melanie Koehert. Each of the wise men has his own tune, the last—"the black and little one"—a deliciously perky tune, and when the singer ends the piano recapitulates the three tunes. Wolf accompanied this song behind a screen as the children, dressed up as the wise men, sang it and marched off at the end. On this happy note this splendid recital ends, and may it make many new friends for Wolf. A.R.

★VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. Mass in G minor. Michael Welles (soprano), John Whitworth (alto), Gerald English (tenor), Maurice Bevan (bass), Choristers of Canterbury Cathedral and the Renaissance Singers.

★BRITTEN. A Ceremony of Carols. Mark Elder and James Finch (soloists), Chorister of Canterbury Cathedral with Maria Korchinska (harp). Directed by Dr. Sidney Campbell. Argo Stereo ZRG5179 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: RG179 (1/60). Recorded in Canterbury Cathedral.

The stereo version of this fine recording presents a more diffused sound, with rather less volume of tone than the mono, but does not make more of the antiphonal writing. This, however, is not surprising, as the responding choirs are given, almost invariably, the same dynamics. In the *Ceremony of Carols* the reverberation in *I sing of a maiden who is Makles*, which I noted as a little troublesome in the mono, is smoothed out. The general impression on stereo is of the choirs, in these very beautiful performances, being heard at a somewhat greater distance from the listener. A.R.

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD. Norwegian Songs. Grieg. *Efterastormen*: Og Jeg, vil Ha' Mig en Hjertenskaer: Jeg Giver Mit Digt Til Varen (arr. Valdar): *Til En No. 1* (arr. Valdar): *Till En No. 11* (arr. Valdar). Eggen. Aere Der Evice Forar I Livet. Alnaes. De Hundre Violiner: Vaarlaengsler: Nu Brister I Alle De Kloster: Februarborgen Ved Golfen. Lie (arr. Valdar). Nykelen: Skinnvenbrev. Kirsten Flagstad (soprano), **London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Oivin Fjeldstad. Decca Mono LXT5558: ★Stereo SXL2145 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.).

This recital of eminently vocal and melodious songs shows Kirsten Flagstad in fine voice and obviously happy in singing.

songs by composers of her native land. The orchestral accompaniments tend to be rather lush and to obscure idiomatic differences between the composers, but they are, as the stereo recording especially shows, very well balanced with the voice and excellently played. The first of the Grieg songs, *Autumn Storm*, is the only one at all well known. The second one "And I want a sweetheart for myself" is of folksong like character and sung with great zest, the *Till En (To one)* numbers are beautiful love songs and *Jeg Giver* (I give my poem to the spring) is a joyous affair sufficiently described by its title. Among the remaining songs the simple ones by Alnaes are the most attractive. Harold Lie's two items are much more ambitious, the first one tragic and dramatic, and the second a setting of a poem about a bat searching for its mate (it is called *A Bat's Letter*). This is so portentous that one must presume it to have some symbolic meaning.

Kristian Lange contributes useful notes on the composers and the songs—the poems of which he translates, in whole or in part, into prose. This is a most enjoyable recital.

A.R.

★**ROGER WAGNER CHORALE.** **Handel.** Hallelujah from "Messiah". **Orlando di Lasso.** Echo Song. **Mozart.** Alleluia from "Exsultate, Jubilate", K.165. **Boordin.** Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens from "Prince Igor". **Traditional.** Soon I will be Done (arr. Dawson). Polly Wolly Doodle (arr. Kubik). **Orff.** Praeclusio from "Catulli Carmina". **Roger Wagner Chorale.** Capitol Stereo SP8431 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: P8431 (11/58).

Virtuoso! is the title of this record, and in so far as virtuosity is concerned with a machine-like accuracy of delivery, at all tempos and at any dynamic, the Roger Wagner Chorale earns the title. Its precision-delivery of the Praeclusio from Orff's *Catulli Carmina* has earned the composer's commendation, as well it might. The scene, accompanied by four pianos (generally marked *martellato*, or "hammered out", and on occasion *martellatissimo*) and a percussion battery, is given a concert, not a dramatic, performance; and in this stereo version it seems a pity that more was not made of the antiphonal effects implied in the instruction *sinistra juvenes dextra juvenculae*. The laughter of the old men is omitted but the erotic shouts are given out with the proper Youth Rally enthusiasm, coupled to scrupulous exactitude of detail. As the sleeve-note modestly puts it: "the simple melodies take on a lustrous dramatic quality under the magic of the Chorale's artistry, in a superb recording that brings out all of the music's dynamic impact".

In the miscellany on the other side there is not much sense of style or period. The echo effects of the *Lassus* song are more striking in stereo (all the same, there is something artificial about the quality of the echo). The recording is generally more lifelike in this new form. If you like to hear

a group of American ladies carolling the "Alleluia" which Mozart composed for the beautiful Rauzzini (and doing so brilliantly, with staccato articulation) this is a record for you.

A.P.

ERNST HAEFLIGER. Schumann.

Der Knabe mit dem Wunderhorn (Geibel): Meine Rose (Lenau): Der Nussbaum (Mosen). Liederkreis, Op. 39: Mondnacht (Eichendorff); Schöne Fremde (Eichendorff). **Schoeck.** Wanderlied der Prager Studenten (Eichendorff): An meine Mutter (Mörike): Nachruf (Eichendorff): Das bescheidene Wünschlein (Spitteler). **Kodály.** Gesang des Verbannten (Balassa/Szabolesi): Gleich dem Feuer! (Anon./Szabolesi): Warte, Vögelein (Anon./Emma Kodály). **Wolf.** Heimweh (Mörike): In der Frühe (Mörike): Auf einer Wanderung (Mörike): Der Gärtner (Mörike): Er ist's (Mörike). **Ernst Häfliger** (tenor), **Hertha Klust** (piano). D.G.G. Mono LPEM19171 (12 in., 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.). Stereo: SLPM136017 (10/59).

I praised this recital, in stereo form, last October, but chided D.G.G. for giving us no hint what unfamiliar songs by Schoeck and Kodály were about (A.R. did the same on another page, reviewing Fischer-Dieskau's Schoeck recital). The mono has a new sleeve-note, again in four languages, and equally unhelpful. Positively misleading, I would say, when it declares that "Schoeck's music expresses the innate character of our own times remarkably well". It does not do that—but the songs are beautiful ones (the lovely Eichendorff setting, *Nachruf*, once recorded by Karl Erb, is the only overlap with Fischer-Dieskau). The Kodály songs are declamatory, quite obviously about something, and without knowing what, we lose more than half their point. This cultivated, attractive recital is again very well recorded on mono.

A.P.

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Escamillo Thomas Krause (bar.)

With the Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna Volksoper conducted by Argeo Quadri. Qualiton Mono BLPM11464 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Excerpts: Overture; Habanera; Micaela/Don José duet; Seguidille; Toreador Song; Flower Song; Card Trio; Chorus and Micaela's solo, Act 3: Final Duet, Act 4.

These excerpts from Bizet's opera are sung in a thoroughly "German" German, for me making the infinitely familiar music odd and clumsy. If you do not find that an insuperable disadvantage then you should be able to appreciate a performance which is well played and recorded, with sensible tempi and the right swing (e.g. in the Toreador Song). Frau Niekerk sings Micaela's music appealingly, and the third

act solo with something approaching distinction. Hers is a pleasant Viennese style of singing, with a smooth well covered top (unlike many a provincial French Micaela who appears to sing exclusively from the front of the teeth). But the Carmen, bless her, is a very Deutsch sounding body—and she really can't touch the Card Scene, even if her vamping, in the first act passes muster. The tenor is an old friend and I daresay carries conviction in this role in the opera house. He puts a lot of energy into it, but naturally it cannot sound in the least idiomatic in German and with a teutonic tenor type of production. The baritone sounds a sturdy and useful member of the company. Viennese *Carmens* can be very stirring and I don't want to dismiss this, as it could give much pleasure to the right person. But that person is not I.

P.H.-W.

PUCCELLI. La Bohème—excerpts.

Rodolfo Isidoro Antonioli (ten.)
Schahard Aurelio Oppicelli (bar.)
Benoîte Eddie Perusat (bass)
Mimi Aureliano Beltrami (sop.)
Marcello Lorenzo Testi (bar.)
Colline Giuliano Ferrein (bass)
Musetta Yoda Valtratti (sop.)

With the Bologna State Theatre Chorus and Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Rigacci. D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 478049 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).

Excerpts: Non son in vena; Cbi e la?; Che gelida manina; Si mi chiamano Mimi; Eh! Rodolfo; O soave fanciulla; Quando m'en vo; Marcello; Sirena; Finale, Act 2; Mimi e una civetta (part); Completion of Act 3; La Danza con musica vocale; Completion of Act 4.

The four acts of *La Bohème* are here shorn of their early stages and fitted onto one disc. Once the music has begun it is allowed to continue without further cuts. Act 1 starts almost with the arrival of Mimi. Act 2 runs from Musetta's waltz to the end. Act 3 starts in the middle of the trio with Rodolfo singing the words "Mimi e tanto malata, ogni di più declina . . . la povera piccin' e condannata" and then runs on through Mimi's farewell and the quartet. The last act gives a snatch of the romping party-music just before Musetta bursts in with the news that Mimi is out on the staircase dying. The rest follows; Coat Song and reminiscences leading to the death scene.

This is a very Italian performance, lingeringly and lovingly done, with instinctive and idiomatic handling of the music. The first act is beautifully recorded, capturing the voices ideally—elsewhere it sounds as if the engineers had suddenly taken fright, both in the finale to Act 2 which is dimmed and in "Sono andati" in Act 3, as if they were expecting Mimi to let fly some blood-curdling shriek so that they must have a hand on the knob ready to turn her "down".

Neither the Musetta, the Marcello nor the Colline in what we hear of them is a really top flight performer of the music on this showing, but there is much else to praise. Mme Beltrami made a very pleasant impression when she sang Mimi in London at the Stoll Theatre and she confirms that impression here. She recalls

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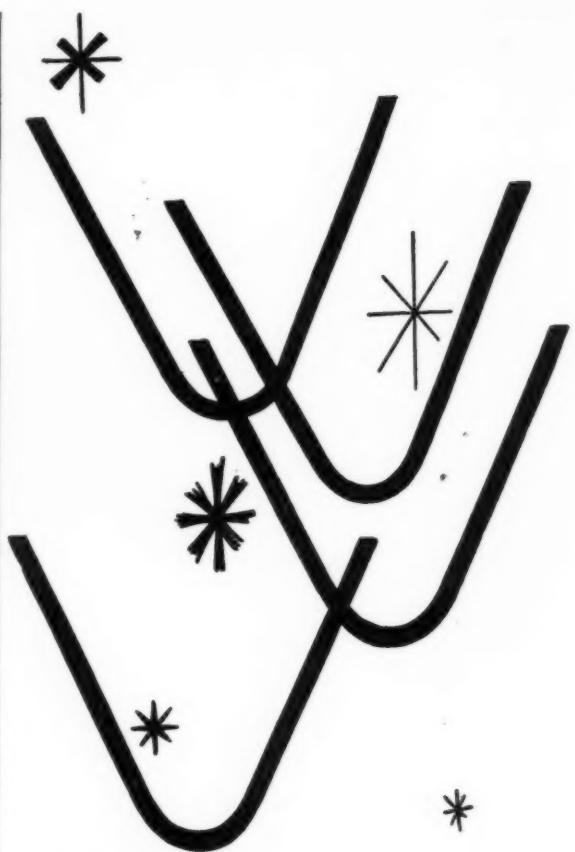
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Rosetta Pampanini and many another innately well-cast Italian Mimi—warm, lyrical, with plenty of reserve and no inhibitions about precise note values. The Rodolfo is not quite so confident an artist but he too gets the feeling of the music, its heart and idiom as though by the light of nature. Together in the first act these excellent artists make a delightful impression, recaptured also in the last act. Mme Beltrami's "Addio" too is artistic but generally the third act, like the fourth, suffers from a too relaxed and negative orchestral handling.

Connoisseurs will find this not uninteresting as getting us away from the well-worn stars; the unfussy buyer too could be assured of an idiomatic Italian *Bohème* in so far as it is offered. But it is unlikely to challenge complete versions or even highlights extracted therefrom. P.H.-W.

PUCCINI. Gianni Schicchi: "O mio babbino caro". *Tosca*: "Vissi d'arte".

Dorothy Kirsten (soprano), **New York Metropolitan Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Fausto Cleva**. Philips Mono SBF231 (7 in., 5s. 3d. plus 1s. 8½d. P.T.).

Dorothy Kirsten has a clear and attractive soprano. She made her Metropolitan debut as Mimi in 1945. Reports of her, and the few records that have reached this country, all suggest a far more stylish and reliable singer than the Signore A. and B. and C. (supply the names for yourself) that one tends to hear in her repertory today. This is an attractive little disc, and the recording is good. A.P.

★VERDI. Macbeth: "Nel di della vittoria . . . Vieni! t'affretta!"; "La luce langue"; "Una macchia è qui tuttora!"; Nabucco: "Ben io t'invenni"; "Anch'io dischiuso un giorno". **Ernani**: "Sorta è la notte . . . Ernani! Ernani, involami". **Don Carlos**: "Tu che le vanità". **Maria Callas** (soprano), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Nicola Rescigno**. Columbia Stereo SAX2293 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: 33CX1628 (3/59). Items marked † also available on ESL6260 (10/59).

This is a stereo version of a collection of strenuous Veridian solos which in mono already tests Mme Callas very highly. Granted that she is a great artist in a thousand ways, one of the ways is not the successful taking of climactic top notes (six-four usually) with which Verdi crowned the ends of his big scenes. Bernard Shaw used to complain that Verdi made inhuman demands on singers in this respect and listening to the precarious shriek with which Mme Callas concludes the fast finale of Abigaile's scena and Elvira's waltz, one can well feel that he was right. I cannot admit a singer as a complete artist who cannot, however, in this reach of her voice either hold it steady or float the tone—even the comparatively steady ultimate note in the sleep-walking scene is shown in stereo to be barely secure. However, many people do not seem to mind these flaws in the least

and of course where Mme Callas is using the middle of her voice and (or) using it with little pressure, we can all agree that she is a most lovely artist. The intoning grief of the sleep-walking scene, the soft, meditative section of Abigaile's aria (at "Anch'io dischiuso . . .") are strikingly beautiful and significant. So is the lilt she gives the *Ernani* number (the end is far less exciting because of insecurity than either the versions of Ponselle, or more recently of Eileen Farrell). The least satisfying is "Tu che le vanità" the queen's great prayer from the last act of *Don Carlos* where a greater weight, majesty and spaciousness of control are needed, in the manner of Margherita Grandi's famous record. Especially in the stereo version, one feels Mme Callas's voice to be unequal to this test. It is as if a quite gentle-voiced lyrical mezzo-soprano were trying to tackle *hoch dramatisch* music, a dove playing the hawk. By and large the stereo version presents the more pleasing sound though it is less flattering, more revealing of the singer's performance. P.H.-W.

WAGNER. *Tristan und Isolde*. Act 1—Prelude; Scene 3—"Weh, ach Weh! dies zu dulden"; Act 3—"Mild und leise" (*Liebestod*). **Birgit Nilsson** (soprano), **Grace Hoffman** (soprano), **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Hans Knappertsbusch**. Decca Mono LXT5559: ★Stereo SXL2184 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4½d. P.T.).

Those who have not heard Nilsson in the opera house can have little doubt, after listening to this disc, that she is well on the way to becoming a great Isolde. She lacks nothing of the imperious manner of the Princess, the fury of the woman scorned, in Scene 3 of Act 1, and there is tenderness in her singing at the moment when, as she was about to kill him, Tristan looked into her eyes and she let the sword fall. But Isolde's repetition of Brangäne's words about Tristan guiding the ship safely to King Mark's land should be filled with more bitterness, and the phrase, "Das war' ein Schatz", later on, with a more pointed irony; and, in general, Nilsson needs to develop more incisive enunciation. But what glorious singing she gives us; full throated in the great passage, "O blinde Augen!", which she ends with an electrifying top B natural, producing another (no mere glancing at the note) on "lacht" just before her thrilling singing of the curse. Grace Hoffman begins well, but in the lovely music Wagner has given Brangäne when consoling her mistress she seems to have difficulty over the high G's, producing strained and "hooty" tone.

The *Liebestod* is introduced after the Prelude to Act 1, with the eight bars preceding it—sounding rather foggy in both versions—and it would surely have been more effective to have included the vocal part—Brangäne's few words—at this point. Nilsson sings the *Liebestod* superbly, if without the rock-like steadiness of Flagstad all through, but fails to soften her tone at "sanft entwacht", as Wagner has

marked it, and as Flagstad so beautifully sang it. Her high notes are dead centre and she comes through the orchestra at the great climax with thrilling effect, ending with a lovely high F sharp that does indeed suggest Isolde sinking in ecstasy on Tristan's body.

The recording, both in mono and stereo, gives a prominence to the orchestra that has never before been achieved and which enables one to hear much more of the detail of the marvellous score. Sometimes we hear too much. Thus the horns should not be so prominent in the Prelude just before the 'cellos begin what is known as the "glance" theme. Their dynamics are the same as those of the strings, but the melodic interest lies with the latter. The "death motive" in the bass, a few bars later on, is also over-emphasised, but these are small faults in the glorious playing of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra when related to the greater amount of detail heard in proper perspective.

Hans Knappertsbusch cannot, in this case, be accused of sluggish tempi, even though his interpretation is not so fine grained as that of Furtwängler; nor, in the *Liebestod*, does he impart the same passionate tension to the phrases that lead up to the great climax. That, when it does arrive—as in the Prelude—is terrific. There are two places in Scene 3, Act 1, when one is given a feeling of movement on the stage in this very static opera, the sound coming as if from the back of the stage.

The mono version is very good but cannot quite contain the high points of climax and the extra spaciousness of the stereo makes this easily the more recommendable of the two. All in all this is a wonderful disc and one hopes that it may lead, in due time, to a recording of the whole opera.

A.R.

POETRY AND DICTION ETC.

HANS ANDERSEN. *Fairy Tales*. The Ugly Duckling; The Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep; The Princess and the Pea; The Collar; Clod-Poll; The Fir-Tree. Read by **Boris Karloff**. Philips Caedmon Mono TCI109 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

These readings, well recorded, with plenty of presence, are all in the famous Karloff voice, pitched that is chucklesomely low and retaining overtones of the accent of the English landed gentry (especially to be noted in that almost indefinable ability to shed an initial H without the faintest suggestion that the H is being "dropped" which two speakers as different as the late King George V and Miss Gladys Young (reading Pope Hennessy's *Queen Mary*) used to use).

I enjoyed them very much once through. How often you want to replay such things is anyone's guess or taste. For myself, they dispelled wholly a kind of distaste of the author which beset me while visiting his home in Odense in Denmark some years ago where the sight of his huge galoshes suddenly gave me a nasty turn. The matter-of-factness of the reading is just right. I thought again what wonderful tales they in fact are; a proper reaction. P.H.-W.

HILAIRE BELLOC. *Cautionary Verses.* About John, Who Lost a Fortune by Throwing Stones; Jim, Who ran away from His Nurse, and was Eaten by a Lion; Henry King, Who Chewed bits of String and was early Cut Off in Dreadful Agoules; Godolphine Horne, Who was cursed with the Sin of Pride, and Became a Boot-Black; Matilda, Who told Lies, and was Burned to Death; Algernon, Who Played with a Loaded Gun, and, on Missing His Sister, was Reprimanded by His Father; Lord Lundy, Who was Too Freely Moved to Tears, and Thereby ruined his Political Career; Lord Lundy (Second Canto); George, Who played with a Dangerous Toy, and Suffered a Catastrophe; Maria, Who Made Faces and a Deplorable Marriage; Sarah Byng, Who could not Read and was tossed into a Thorny Hedge by a Bull; Charles Augustus Fortescue, Who always did what was Right, and so accumulated an Immense Fortune; Jack and His Pony, Tom; Tom and His Pony, Jack; The Example: The Garden Party. Read by Joyce Grenfell.

W. S. GILBERT. *Bab Ballads.* The Sensation Captain: Ben Allah Achmet; or, The Fatal Tum: Phrenology: The Ape and the Lady: Babette's Love: Peter the Wag: The Yarn of the "Nancy Bell". Read by Stanley Holloway. Philips Caedmon Mono TC1104 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

Wonderful material here, or so say I, who was brought up on Belloc's *Cautionary Verses* and *The Bab Ballads*. I adore every word of both and this I fear makes me hyper-critical. I think Miss Grenfell brings it off very well, in a jolly, racy, unrelishing sort of way like a favourite aunt reading aloud at nursery tea. I agree it would be maddening if she did relish the cleverness of it. All the same, I could well take a little more pointing and moralising in Matilda (who you recall told such lies . . . "it made you gasp and stretch your eyes"). Having hit on this jaunty rather spontaneous tone, it would be difficult to vary it much. But this is not to say the reading is monotonous; far from it; Miss Grenfell brings out the humour charmingly.

On the whole, however, I prefer Mr. Holloway's reading of *The Bab Ballads*. He has a nice weight of delivery but is unself-consciously nimble at the same time. Such things as *The Ape and the Lady* are pitched just right, neither nudgingly jocose nor too flatly factual. I can imagine Americans, perhaps especially, delighting in this record.

P.H.-W.

ROBERT BURNS. *Poetry Readings.* Selected verses from "The Epistle to J. Lapraik": It was a' for our Rightfu' King; To a Louse: To a Mouse: On a Schoolmaster in Cleish Parish, Fifeshire: On rough Roads: To Doctor Blacklock: The Cotter's Saturday Night. Read by Alex Allen. Philips Mono ABE10215 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.).

ROBERT BURNS. Songs. (a) There was a Lad: (b) My Luv's like a Red, Red Rose; (c) John Anderson, My Jo; (d) Ye Banks and Braes. (a) and (c) sung by Joan Alexander, (b) and (d) by Duncan Robertson. Philips Mono ABE10214 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.). From ABL3280-1 (10/50).

This is admirable verse-speaking, clear and varied in tone, and with no moaning at the bar; but to get the full value of this excellently recorded disc the listener, unacquainted with Burns's language, will need to have recourse to the collected edition of his poetry. *To a Louse* should have been given its full title on the sleeve—it continues, *on seeing one on a Lady's Bonnet at Church*—for the point of the poem is its progress of the loathsome creature up her bonnet and the contrast of it, as Maurice Lindsay says in his book on the poet, "with her fine social pretensions". The notes are fairly helpful otherwise and the disc can be warmly recommended to lovers of Burns's poetry north and south of the Border. The songs, taken from the *Burns Nicht* disc, are excel-

lently sung by Joan Alexander and Duncan Robertson but the string accompaniments, as I said in my review, sound out of place.

A.R.

ROBERT GRAVES. *Poetry Reading.* Rocky Acres: Lost Love; An English Wood; The Pier-Glass; Mermaid, Dragon, Fiend; Ulysses; The Saccubus Gardener; Front Door Soliloquy; In Broken Images; On Rising Early; Sea Side; Hell; Down, Wanion; Down; Nature's Lineaments; The Philosopher; To evoke Posity; Certain Merdes With her lips only; The Reader over my Shoulder: Advocates; The Terraced Valley; The Ages of Oath; Bad of Play; The Great-Grandmother; No more Ghosts; The Shet; The Thieves; To Sleep; Despise and Still; The Oath; Mid-Winter Waking; The Door; From the Embassy; Cry Faugh!; The Mark; The Sea Horse; The Last Jewel; The Window Sill; Spoils; Call it a good Marriage; To Calliope. Read by Robert Graves. Lateen LPV2 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

First, this is a well-chosen and persuasive collection of Mr. Graves' poetry which I myself like very much. Second, it is always interesting to hear a poet read his own works, even if someone else might in the event read them better. But the identity of voice and the thing said is sometimes blurred when the reader is not the poet, especially in work so personal as this. Mr. Graves uses a rather dead-pan delivery and he is not really very clear, though one gets used to him as time wears on. The first poem is called *Rocky Acres* and begins, I now perceive, "This is wild land . . ." What I first thought he said was "Rock of Ages: This is while Ann . . ." It would be a sad world if we all spoke like elocutionists, but I do rather like to make instant sense of what I hear on the air; labials and dentals can be made to tell without exaggeration in the academic manner. Evidently the editors, however, felt that the naturalness of the performance was the object to go for. They even leave in such things as a preliminary clearing of the throat; probably quite rightly too. Later generations will find in just that "blemish" perhaps the detail that springs the record in their imagination. But a lot of people will be interested here and now too. Presentable standards. Good sleeve. P.H.-W.

MOIRA LISTER. "People in Love". Jose d'Almeida. Her Son, Thomas Croker. The Lady of Gollerus. Guy de Maupassant. The Chaumener. Edgar Allan Poe. The Tell-Tale Heart. Read by Moira Lister. Argo Mono RG100 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

These four smashingly well-told tales, two rather agonizingly about ingratitude, are given what it is fair to call "actress" treatment. They are dramatised, the persons take on suitable accents and tones when they speak and the narrator's tone and accent, too, are differently adapted for each story. Moreover, there are snatches of atmospheric music to punctuate the disc. I found it extremely well worth listening to, but I wouldn't want to keep putting it on for myself, again and again. It is a social record in fact; the sort of thing dentists ought to have in their waiting rooms to take your mind off the coming ordeal.

Some people don't like "acted" reading; but I do, if it is done with as much taste and tact as this. The voice is beautifully modulated and placed and the recording is vivid, though there is a wisp of pre-echo in my review copy, not that you hear the words ahead, but a vague extraneous sound of the voice somewhere else is faintly

discernible here and there. It would spoil it to tell you the stories, but they are about a mother remeeting her son, an Irish fisherlad who marries a mermaid, a devoted chairmender, and a Poe spine-chiller. Quite a good record for a speechless after-dinner party.

P.H.-W.

JAMES JOYCE. *Finnegan's Wake:* (a) Anna Livia Plurabelle; (b) Shem the Penman; (c) Read by Siobhan McKenna, (b) by Cyril Cusack. Philips Caedmon Mono TC1066 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

For Joyce, the LP read aloud disc seems to me invaluable. To have it performed at you, by a talented Irish actor or actress eases the toil of creating off the printed page, a toil so great (I have to admit) that I just have never got through the entire book. (When it was published the late Richard Capell, the music critic, locked himself in a room and read it from cover to cover in one week.) But "voiced" how easy, funny, surrealistic madly involved it becomes: yet how clear it remains. The double meanings pile on each other like spilkins in a heap from which Joyce keeps withdrawing the foundation.

Recording: excellent. Performances: both brilliant.

P.H.-W.

SHELLEY. *Poetry Reading.* Music, when soft voices die; With a Guitar, to Jane; Ozymandias; From Prometheus unbound; To a Skylark; Hymn to Intellectual Beauty; Ode to the West Wind; Adonais. Read by Vincent Price. Philips Caedmon Mono TC1059 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

I once heard an American Juliet say, so it seemed to my ear "Is there no piddy sidding in the clouds?" This was good for me inasmuch as it made me realise that we are much divided as well as united by a common tongue. Mr. Price's voice is a beautiful organ and he uses it magnificently, but it would be folly to blanket the fact that to my ear it is a transatlantic voice, virile, firm on the hard palate, but transatlantic, summoning up by its every overtone something wholly external to what I conceive to be "the world of Shelley". This is wholly a personal matter. When Peter Ustinov played Nero in a Hollywood film, a New York film critic said: "Nero? Just figure that old so-and-so with a *Bridgish* college accent".

The recording is good, the reading strongly dramatic, not meretricious, full of feeling and exemplary in its way. There is a full deep resonance, as if the reader were alone in a cathedral, and this may strike you as right. Not unrecommended, but you need to know what you are getting.

P.H.-W.

★SHAKESPEARE. (a) King John. (ZRG5168-71). (b) Macbeth. (ZRG5175-77). (c) Measure for Measure. (ZRG5164-67). (d) The Merchant of Venice. (ZRG5160-63). (e) The Two Gentlemen of Verona and A Lover's Complaint. (ZRG5172-74). Complete and Uncut texts as edited by John Dover Wilson. Sets (a), (c) and (d) comprising four 12 in. Argo Stereo records, 120s. plus 39s. P.T. per set and Sets (b) and (e) comprising three 12 in., 90s. plus 29s. 3d. P.T. per set. Recorded by Members of the Marlowe Society of the University of Cambridge and Professional Players. Directed by George Rylands. Recorded under the Auspices of the British Council. (Full texts are available from Argo price 6s. each. Text, plus annotation and Glossary, price 18s.). The five sets previously available in Mono on RG168-71 (9/59), RG175-77 (10/50), RG164-67 (9/59), RG160-63 (9/59) and RG172-74 (10/50) respectively.

The mono recordings of these works were reviewed in March, September, and October last year. Some tiny recording

faults were mentioned and it is good to find that these have entirely disappeared in the stereo versions.

I expected that Stereo would produce greater "presence" but I was quite unprepared for the considerable increase in "impact". It isn't simply that Macbeth stands here and Banquo over there. (This business of identifying the exact spot soon becomes tiresome.) It is that Macbeth is more manifestly speaking to Banquo, while I, a privileged spectator, am listening to them. Do the witches go round the cauldron? No, they do not, but their essential remoteness from their clients is made obvious. The battle scenes in *King John*, the trial scene in *The Merchant*, the wood in the *Two Gentlemen*—all these are much more vivid. But this is no Stereophonic Holiday. The plays are set firmly on a stage, a somewhat primitive stage with deliberately rudimentary sound effects. And since stereo makes this clearer, the main article in Mr. George Rylands' creed—faithfulness to the text—is considerably enhanced.

J.G.

POETS READING. W. B. Yeats. The Song of the Old Mother; Innisfree; Extract from "Cooke and Ballylee". W. H. Auden. In Memory of W. B. Yeats. Edith Sitwell. Still falls the rain. Dylan Thomas. A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by fire, of a Child in London. Fern Hill. Louis MacNeice. Turistacks: Refugees. Robert Graves. Poem to my Son (To Juan at the Winter Solstice). Gertrude Stein. If I told him (A completed portrait of Picasso). Archibald MacLeish. Epistle to be left in the Earth. E. E. Cummings. what if a much of a which of a wind: "sweet spring is your". Marianne Moore. What are years. William Empson. Missing Dates. Stephen Spender. I think continually of those: Seascapes. Conrad Alken. Tetelestai. Philips Caedmon Mono TC0995 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). The items marked * and † previously available on TC1018 (11/58) and TC1002 (11/58) respectively.

This is the record to buy to prove the contention that a poet reading his own poetry will always provide something special, a clue to understanding, which you would not get from an actor reading it. Besides being historically an immensely interesting album of souvenirs, it contains many intrinsically beautiful things—such as the late Dylan Thomas's reading of *Fern Hill*. Each item seems to have been selected to display the poet's idiosyncrasies; Dame Edith's faintly moaning sing song, Gertrude Stein's strong, young sounding, rhythmically alive, full tone, Stephen Spender's Oxford cantilating, Louis MacNeice and Marianne Moore—each has an indefinable placing of the voice. I find the whole collection fascinating—on two levels, for the poetry and for the study of voices. P.H.-W.

POETS READING. T. S. Eliot. The Wasteland. Robert Frost. Birches: After Apple-Picking. William Carlos Williams. The Seafarer. Wallace Stevens. The Idea of Order at Key West. Richard Eberhart. The Grounding. Elisabeth Bishop. Manuelinho. Richard Wilbur. Love calls us to the Things of this World. Philips Caedmon Mono TC0994 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

A pendant to the above, which gives the whole of one side to Eliot's immensely weighty, impressive, even laborious but somehow convincing reading of *The Wasteland*—in itself worth the money. The reverse houses a distinguished collection of American poets, reading with much feeling and sincerity. All items in my opinion earn their time.

P.H.-W.

POETRY OF IRELAND. Rolleston. The Dead at Clonmacnoise (a) Yeats. The Rose Tree (b): The Wild Swans at Coole (a): From "Vaccination" Section 3 (c): From "Vaccination" Section 4 (c). O'Connor. Kilcash (c). Carrilin. The Ballad of Douglas Bridge (a). Milligan. When I was a Little Girl (b). A.E. Outcast (c): Dust (c): Reconciliation (c). Fox. The County of Mayo (c). MacDonagh. The Hungry Grass (b): The Day set for Our Wedding (b). Wilson. The Whins (a). Hayward. Love in Ulster (a): The Stranger (b). MacNeice. Carrickfergus (c). Letts. In Service (b). Ledwidge. Thomas MacDonagh (a): A Twilight in Middle March (a). Hewitt. The Little Louogh (c). Hyde. Youth of the Bound Black Hair Black Hair (b). Ferguson. Dear dark Head (a). Rogers. Arnagh (c). Campbell. The Old Woman (a). Kavanagh. Memory of Brother Michael (b). Stephens. The good paths (a): Little Things (a). Joyce. Poem from "Cleopatra Must" (a). Collier. A Cradle Song (b). Casey. The Riving of the Moon (a). Allingham. The Lover and the Birds (a). Read by Richard Hayward (a). Ethnie Dunne (b), and John Hewitt (c). Bolton Mono LBE29 (12 in., 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4d. P.T.).

It would surprise me very much if this attractive disc found adverse criticism on any level (except from people who do not like poetry read on gramophone records at all). The selection is representative, intrinsically beautiful, various and touching (even when it touches anti-British sentiments which I shall not be expected to share even if I understand them). The readers are actors and are conscious of the effect they are making but as the effect is to my ear delightful I do not in the least mind this. Both the men are willing to indulge in a tremolo when they think the words warrant it. Miss Dunne's lovely clear voice makes me think of Sara Allgood. She too can be extremely comic at times. The Irish are always at their best when they have got someone to be (so to say) "Irish at"; and the conditions of this record are ideal. They must have loved making it.

P.H.-W.

FOLK MUSIC

CLASSICAL MUSIC FROM PAKISTAN.

Raga Durbari: Bilampat (Slow Tempo) In Jhumra Tal; Durat (Fast Tempo) In Tin Tal. **Raga Kalavati**: Bilampat (Slow Tempo) In Tilwara Tal; Durat (Fast Tempo) In Tin Tal. **Nazakat Ali and Salamat Ali**. H.M.V. Mono CLPI308 (12 in., 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4d. P.T.).

A new addition to the "Music of the World" series is an inexpensive record of classical music from Pakistan. This seems to me one of the best among recent issues of this kind, for instead of trying to give short and often unconvincing extracts from essentially lengthy performances these two excellent musicians, Nazakat Ali and Salamat Ali (assisted by Ustad Allah Dutta, tabla, and Ustad Zahoori Khan, sarangi) limit their concert very wisely to only two *Raga*, one on each side of the disc.

The singers are both young, in their middle twenties in fact, and in view of their prowess is remarkable, and their ability to interpret both slow and fast sections of a *Raga* is far from common. They were trained at first by their father, Ustad Vilayat Ali Khan, and then at the Sham Chroasi School of Music, adding to this traditional teaching certain new ideas of their own. The particular form they have chosen to record here is a binary one, known as *Khyal*, which consists of a slow invocation (*Bilampat*)

gradually quickening to a vigorous and exciting fast section (*Durat*).

In *Raga Durbari*, composed by a musician of Akhbar the Great called Tansen, you have a colourful picture of the Emperor's court; in *Raga Kalavati*—a much more recent framework evolved by Maharshtians—the prevailing theme is that of loneliness and despair of a lover parted from his sweetheart. The imitative passages between voice and sarangi may not be in the best classical tradition but they sound very convincing when performed as spontaneously and naturally as they are here. Lovers of Indo-Pakistani music should be well satisfied with this disc.

D.S.

LOPES GRACA. Pequeno Cancioneiro do Menino Jesus. Cantos do Natal. Grupo Vocal Feminino "Harmónia" (director, Friedrich Verner) with chamber instrumental ensemble conducted by Fernando Lopes Graça. H.M.V. Mono DLPC19 (10 in., 20s. plus 6s. 6d. P.T.).

Most composers interested in the folk music of their native country start by making arrangements of traditional songs, then introduce occasional folk themes into their own compositions, and end up by writing entirely original music which may nevertheless show that it has roots in the folk idiom. This normal course has been more or less reversed by the Portuguese musician Lopes Graça, who appears to have taken up arranging folk tunes only in mid-career, after having already composed various non-folk works. This is exemplified on this disc, where, of the two works for female voices and instruments, the *Little Songbook of the Infant Jesus* (written 1934) is a collection of seven original settings of traditional poems, while the *Christmas Songs*, composed over twenty years later, is a set of seven arrangements of folk songs (plus one original setting of a *cantiga* by Gil Vicente). Paradoxically, there is more musical individuality in the arrangements than in the *Songbook*, which has not much character vocally but depends largely on a lyrical instrumental texture (in which, however, the celesta is over-prominent). Some of the writing strikes one as clumsy—some awkward block chords in *Oração* or the tortured abrupt modulation in *O sono do Menino*; the most attractive here is *O enxoval do Menino*, which employs a kind of organum between two solo voices. In the *Christmas Songs* too there is an occasional archaic effect, as in the two-voice *A feste*; but this is combined with other styles, and the general impression is remarkably eclectic.

The traditional tunes are set with as much freedom as, say, Britten uses in his folk-song settings—though I have no wish to institute comparisons of stature. The performances under the composer's direction are quite adequate, if not particularly subtle. I hope I shall not be misunderstood if I say that, since all three of the Portuguese discs of serious music issued in this country over the past two years have featured Senhor Graça as pianist or conductor as well as composer or arranger, we are getting a somewhat restricted view here of Portuguese music.

L.S.

CLASSICAL REISSUES

ORCHESTRAL

FRANZ ANDRE. *Symphony No. 7* (Beethoven). Belgian National R.O. Telefunken Mono GMA7 (12 in., 19s. 9d. plus 6s. 5d. P.T.). From LGX66011 (2/54).

RUDOLF SERKIN. *Piano Concertos Nos. 1-4* (Beethoven). Serkin (piano), Philadelphia Orch./Ormandy. Fontana Mono EFR2034-7 (four 10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T. each). The records may be purchased separately. Concerto No. 1 from Philips ABR4040 (10/55), Nos. 2 and 4 from ABL3184 (10/57), No. 3 from ABL4062 (5/58).

I remember hearing Franz André's recording of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony years ago, and being amazed at the heavy pedantic phrasing throughout and the incomprehensible *accelerandi* at the end of the first and second movements. Listening to it again, I'm still amazed; the recording is as excellent as ever, but this performance cannot compare with the great ones on disc. Those looking for a good cheap mono recording should try the Rowicki-Heliodor reviewed elsewhere in this issue, or the Kleiber-Decca in the Ace of Club series, both of which actually cost less than this one.

The Fontana set of all Beethoven's piano concertos for just less than five pounds is indeed a magnificent bargain—especially as the soloist is one of the outstanding Beethoven pianists of our age, Rudolf Serkin. The performances, obviously the fruit of a lifetime's study and experience, show a deep insight into Beethoven's style and achieve a beautiful balance between structure and expression. I personally find Nos. 3, 4 and 5 rather too calculated, at the expense of spontaneity; there are certainly more fiery accounts of No. 3, more poetic interpretations of No. 4, and more titanic performances of No. 5. The strange thing is that there seems to be a lot more natural feeling in the lesser-known Nos. 1 and 2, probably because, in the nature of things, they have been less pondered over. Nevertheless, it's a fascinating and rewarding experience to be guided through all Beethoven's piano concertos, ranging from his twenty-fifth to his fiftieth year. The recordings are unduly bottom-heavy (No. 1 excepted), but with a considerable bass cut they sound admirably firm and clear; only in the last pages of Nos. 1 and 2, and in the last two movements of No. 3, does the quality deteriorate.

D.C.

FRANZ ANDRE. *Symphony No. 4* (Tchaikovsky). Belgian National R.O. Telefunken Mono GMA6 (12 in., 19s. 9d. plus 6s. 5d. P.T.). From LGX66002 (10/54).

VAN OTTERLOO. (a) *Symphony No. 6, "Pastoral"* (Beethoven). (b) *Egmont Overture* (Beethoven). (a) V.S.O., (b) Hague P.O. Philips Mono GBL5515 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). (a) from ABL3048 (6/55), (b) from SBR6219 (7/57).

It was impossible for Franz André's recording of the Tchaikovsky Fourth to hold its place in the catalogue beside the competition of versions like Beecham's, quite clearly; it was a pretty good performance but not in the breath-taking class, and the recording was only so-so by today's standards. However, now that it has been demoted to the cheaper label things look rather different. The only version that offers direct comparison now is the Russian one under Ivanov (Heliodor

479015), which contains Moussorgsky's *Night on a Bare Mountain* as a bonus, but is rather more boxily recorded. Of the two performances Ivanov's seems at times rather perfunctory, while André's is, if anything, too high-powered.

In the case of Otterloo's *Pastoral*, the quality of the recording is not so very far behind the best of the more expensive versions, and if it comes to that the performance itself is better than many of those as well. When you consider that there is a distinctly virile performance of *Egmont* thrown in for your money, this is really very good value. J.N.

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. *Die Meistersingers von Nürnberg* (Wagner): Prelude, Act 3; Dance of the Apprentices; Procession of the Mastersingers. R.P.O. Philips Mono ABE10097 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From ABL3039 (6/55).

IGOR MARKEVICH. *Tannhäuser* (Wagner): Venusberg Music. Berlin P.O. D.G.G. Mono EPL30493 (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.). From DGM19024 (10/56).

HERBERT VON KARAJAN. *L'Arlesienne—Suites No. 1* (Bizet): Prelude; Adagietto; Carillon. Philips Columbia Mono SEL1632 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From 33CX1608 (8/50). Stereo: ESL4057 (9/50).

★**WALTER SUSSKIND.** *Peer Gynt* (Grieg): Morning Mood; Anitra's Dance; Return of Peer Gynt; Solveig's Song. Philips Columbia Stereo ESD7256 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 0d. P.T.). From Mono 33SX1057 (9/57), but appearing in stereo for the first time.

PAUL STRAUSS. *Intermezzi*, L'Amico Fritz (Mascagni). Il Campiello; I Quattro Rusteghi (Wolf-Ferrari). Suor Angelica (Puccini). Berlin Radio S.O. D.G.G. Mono EPL30498 (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.). Stereo SEPL121010 (12/60). This record appears for the first time in mono, but has previously appeared in stereo on SLPE133020 (3/58).

Wagner first. **Sir Thomas Beecham** conducting music from *Die Meistersinger* will hardly need recommending to any who remember his pre-war Covent Garden performances or have heard him do these excerpts from Act 3 in the concert hall since then. His reading of the Prelude is marvellously tender, while the brilliance and vitality of the rest are superb. A glowing performance, very well recorded. The turn-over comes at the end of the Prelude and is quite reasonably managed. Markevich's conducting of the *Venusberg Music* is less distinguished, though quite reasonably done. The sound could be more vivid for such vivid music, though in general quality it is good enough. The turn-over comes reasonably. Another disc from the Karajan LP of *L'Arlesienne* needs little more than a pat on the back, for the whole thing has been praised often enough. It is beautifully played and engineered. The *Carillon* is too fast for my own liking but the pieces make up a good EP, since the *Adagietto* is such a well-contrasted middle item.

Susskind's *Peer Gynt* is new to me (and is new in stereo anyway). He certainly gets very good playing indeed, some of it really lovely and with really good soft playing and recording. The stereo sound is good too, if not quite a show-piece. The items, it will be noted, are selected from the two suites. The record of *Intermezzi* from the Italian operas was well received in its stereo form and the mono is very good indeed. Here and there the performances are a bit solid; as W.S.M. remarked, the Wolf-Ferrari shows a slight lack of charm. All the same, a pleasant collection.

T.H.

ERNEST ANSERMET. *Sleeping Beauty* (Tchaikovsky): Pas de six; Waltz; Adagio; Aurora's Variation; Farandole; March; Polacca; Pas de quatre; Intrada; Var. 1, Waltz; Var. 2, Polka; Pas de deux; Var. 2, Finale and Apotheosis. Suisse Romande. Decca Mono BR3029 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5582-4 (11/59).

ERNEST ANSERMET. (a) *Prelude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Debussy). (b) *La Péri: Poème danse* (Dukas). Suisse Romande. Decca Mono BR3013 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). (a) From LXT5424 (5/58); (b) From LXT5454 (5/59).

ROBERT IRVING. *Ballet Suite* (Gretry arr. Lambert): Largo—Andante; Gigue légère; Pantomime; Tambourin; Loure; Air lent; Passepied; Gavotte; Finale. *Ballet Suite* No. 1 (Gluck arr. Motte): Introduction—"Don Juan"; Airs gaies and Lento—"Iphigénie en Aulide"; Musette—"Armidée"; Air gaie—"Iphigénie en Aulide"; Sicilienne—"Armidée"; Air lent—"Iphigénie en Aulide". New S.O. of London. Decca Mono BR3017 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5063 (8/55). Item marked is also available on CEP631 (7in. 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.).

The *Sleeping Beauty* selection explains itself; of Ansermet's extremely vital, rhythmical, and evocative performance I have written earlier. The highlights don't include the Bluebird, or the *Pas de deux chats*, or the main part of the real *pas de deux*, or the Lilac Fairy's tune, or the Panorama. But they do include the Waltz and the Rose Adagio, and Aurora's subsequent solo with obbligato violin. The *pas de quatre* listed is what we call Florestan and his sisters. The balance of sound appears to me to favour strings at the expense of wind. The Debussy-Dukas record is something for keeps. *L'après-midi* is given a ravishingly beautiful performance, lovelier even, I think, than the old Beecham 78 that I used to play almost daily. *La Péri* too, a gorgeously voluptuous piece, is accorded the full treatment; the *Fanfare* is included on this reissue, by the way. And the mono sound is gloriously rich and sensuous. All these three discs are part of a Decca Series called Favourite Ballet Music. *La Péri* will have found new friends since Fonteyn and Somes gave their unforgettable interpretation of Ashton's choreography. But whose favourite is the Grétry Suite, or that tiresome old Gluck-Mottl piece of jiggery pokery? Not mine, and certainly not in recording so hard and uncomfortable.

W.S.M.

ZINO FRANCESCATTI. *Violin Concerto* (Beethoven). Francescatti (violin), Philadelphia Orch./Ormandy. Philips Mono GBL5506 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). From 33CX1011 (11/52).

FERENC FRICSAY. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mendelssohn): Overture; Scherzo; Fairy's March; You Spotted Snakes; Intermezzo; Nocturne; Wedding March; Dance of the Clowns; Finale. Streicher (sop.). Eustati (cont.). Berlin Radio Chamber Choir and Berlin P.O. D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 478032 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). From DGM18001 (2/56).

PABLO CASALS. (a) *Elektra* (Faure). (b) *Les Rés Mages* (Casals). (a) Ensemble of ten 'cellos with the Lamoureux Orch. cond. Casals. (b) 'Cello Ensemble of the Lamoureux Orch. directed Casals. Philips Mono ABE10161 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From ABL3273 (2/60).

Francescatti's recording of the Beethoven Violin Concerto was the best available in its day, and though its day is now so far distant in time as to make a certain amount of surface noise inevitable, the playing, needless to say, has not dated at all. In spite of the background noise (you soon get used to it), this splendid performance backed by first-class orchestral playing seems to me superb value for twenty-two shillings, and I don't know another cheap recording of the work to touch it. Fricsay plays all the more considerable pieces in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* music, though not some of the pleasant

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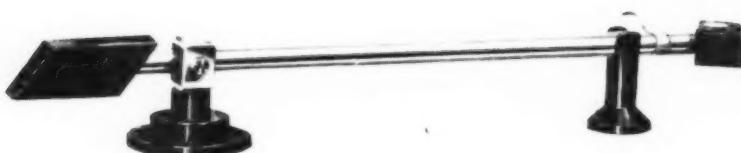
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The London Symphony Orchestra
and The Covent Garden Chorus

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R. STRAUSS

ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA

The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by Karajan

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RAVEL

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GRIEG

PEER GYNT—Suites 1 and 2

The London Symphony Orchestra

conducted by Jövin Fjeldstad

SXL 2012

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GRIEG

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conducted by Jövin Fjeldstad

FRANCK

VARIATIONS SYMPHONIQUES

LITOLFF

SCHERZO from CONCERTO SYMPHONIQUE

with The London Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by Sir Adrian Boult

Clifford Curzon

SXL 2173

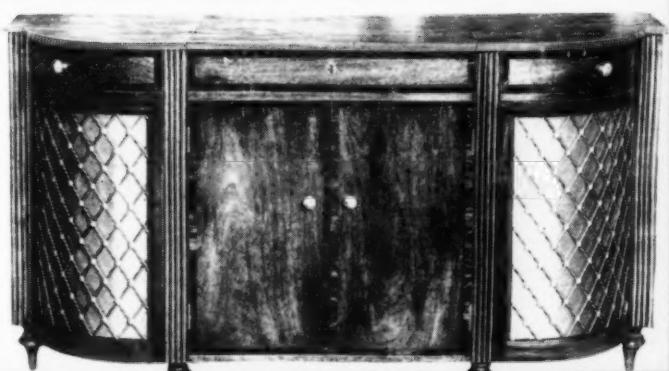
'This seems to be Curzon at his best, and it is certainly one of the most desirable versions of Grieg's lovely concerto.' THE GRAMOPHONE



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GRAMOPHONE RECORD REVIEW

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STRAVINSKY

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STEREO RECORD GUIDE

WITCHES BREW

The New Symphony Orchestra
of London
conducted by Alexander Gibson
SB-2020

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GRAMOPHONE RECORD REVIEW



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trifles such as the ludicrous Funeral March for Pyramus and Thisbe, or the piece where the Wedding March dissolves surprisingly into the Fairy music. "You spotted Snakes" and the fairy finale are sung in German, "Philomel" losing its individuality as "Nachtigal", but as Mendelssohn originally set a German translation for production in Berlin I suppose one cannot complain. The singing is delightful, though I would have liked more of the fairy music on the violins behind the voices in the last chorus; it is almost inaudible. Fricsay gets more of the atmosphere of the overture than in the new version reviewed elsewhere this month, and he is better recorded. A pleasant record. The two pieces conducted by Casals were reviewed last month when they were issued as fill-ups to Beethoven's "Geister" Trio. Again the label states that the Fauré is played as a solo by Casals, but it is in fact played by a number of orchestral 'cellists with Casals on the rostrum. Massed 'cellos are worth hearing once in a while, and Casals seems to be a most sensitive and sincere conductor. His own piece is gravely beautiful.

R.F.

FERENC FRICSAY. Waltzes from *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake* (Tchaikovsky). Berlin Radio S.O. D.G.G. Mono EPL30407 (7 in., 12s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From DGM19116 (11/58).

ERNEST ANSERMET. *Swan Lake Ballet* (Tchaikovsky); Waltz; Dance of the Cygnets; Pas de deux. *Suisse Romande*. Decca Mono CEP630; ★Stereo SEC6041 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.); Mono from LXT5501-2 (4/59); Stereo from SX12107-8 (4/59).

WILLEM VAN OTTERLOO. *Sleeping Beauty* (Tchaikovsky); Pas de Caractère; Waltz. V.S.O. Philips Mono SBF191 (7 in., 5s. 3d. plus 1s. 8d. P.T.). From ABE10109 (7/59).

ERNEST ANSERMET. *Nutcracker Ballet* (Tchaikovsky); Overture; Chinese Dance; Russian Dance; Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy; Waltz of the Flowers. *Suisse Romande*. Decca Mono CEP638; ★Stereo SEC6039 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.); Mono from LXT5498-4 (4/59); Stereo from SX12001-2 (4/59).

LEON MARTINON. *Les Patineurs* (Meyerbeer); Entrée; Pas seul; Pas de deux; Pas de trois; Pas des Patineurs; Finale. *Israel P.O.* Decca Mono CEP629; ★Stereo SEC6040 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.); Mono from LXT5456 (12/58); Stereo from SX12021 (12/58).

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. *Zemire et Azor* (Grétry); Ballet Suite-complete. R.P.O. H.M.V. Mono TEP5169 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From ALP1656 (4/59).

Fricsay's waltzes give a selection that many modest collectors will fancy; but though the sound is lively, the performances are over-driven and loaded with the musical equivalent of heavy cheap scent. *Otterloo* in the waltz is a trifle heavy, and unstylish in his phrasing, but more gratifying; however the other side has only curiosity value since The Puss Duet, which should last only a minute or so, is spun out to 2 mins. 10 secs. (bad value even for its price) by dint of spectacularly ham-fisted rubato—my ears would not believe such unmusical mauling. *Ansermet's* Beauty Waltz is much the most musical of the three, and the other two items will also attract attention, though the violin solo in the G flat adagio (Odette with Siegfried's support and the corps de ballet's connivance) is rather measly. The *Nutcracker Suite*, in all but name (three items missing), is a very tempting EP; the mono sounds slightly more lifelike—the stereo is rather blowsy.

Martinon's dazzling treatment of *Les Patineurs* (minus two numbers from the suite) is another worth recommending; very high-powered playing from the Israel

Orchestra. The Grétry suite is fundamentally one of Beecham's dullest lollipops, with only one and a bit real tunes in it; but the master touch makes almost all of it sound like real music, so skilfully does he polish the base metal into a semblance of precious stone, and such winning sound does he draw from the orchestra. The best number of all, the Pantomime, is also available on a ten-inch (Philips SBR6215) together with sundry succulent sweetmeats, among them Massenet's *Last Sleep* and Berlioz's *Trojans* March. More expensive, but honestly more fun. The recorded sound on the new EP transfer is a bit fierce at times.

W.S.M.

IVRY GITLIS. (a) *Violin Concerto* (Stravinsky). *Colonne Concerts Orch./Byrns*. (b) *Violin Concerto* (Berg). Vienna Pro Musica Orch./Strickland. Vox Mono PL10760 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). (a) from PL9410 (11/58); (b) from PL8660 (5/55).

Despite my unbounded admiration for Stravinsky I have to admit that of the two concertos on this disc it is undoubtedly Berg's that is the greater masterpiece—in fact one of the very finest works written between the wars. It is becoming fashionable to decry Berg ("the Puccini of the tone-row") in comparison with Schoenberg's other favourite pupil, Webern, but one would have to be deafened by prejudice not to recognise the great qualities of this work—deeply expressive, yet at the same time perfectly lucid. Or at least, that is what it should be. This recording gives such a close perspective to the soloist that Berg's intricate balance of sonorities is completely misrepresented; themes of the utmost importance in the orchestra are at times practically inaudible behind the solo violin's figuration, or in a maze of excessive reverberation. Moreover the dynamic range is very limited, so that the quieter passages do not provide anything like as much relaxation as they should. Anyone making the concerto's acquaintance from this record might be forgiven for regarding it as the turgid over-romantic horror as which it is sometimes painted.

Stravinsky's much simpler texture is more clearly recorded, and Byrns also provides a far more finely chiselled accompaniment than William Strickland does for the Berg. Gitlis gives remarkable performances of both concertos; it may well be the recording that gives the impression that he never relaxes the tension of his playing. As the only version of Stravinsky's concerto this can safely be recommended, but if the Berg is your main interest it has to be said that Columbia's version with Gertler and Kletzki (33C1030) is both more sensitive and more satisfactorily recorded.

J.N.

CARL SEEMANN. (a) *Piano Concerto No. 25* (Mozart). (b) *Piano Sonata No. 10* (Mozart). *Seemann (piano), Munich P.O./Lehmann*. D.G.G. Heliodor Mono 479011 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.). (a) from DG16014 (3/56); (b) appears for the first time in this country.

Both of these are sound, rather unexciting performances, quite adequately recorded: just the sort of thing, in fact, which one has a right to look for on the cheaper labels. This is the only cheap version of the great C major concerto I should point out, although several of the more expensive

ones offer another whole concerto as a backing. My own choice would probably still be Serkin's brilliant performance, coupled with K.453; it is rather hard-driven, but K.503 at any rate stands up very well to this treatment. Nevertheless there is a good guinea's-worth of music on the present disc, by any standards. J.N.

IGOR STRAVINSKY. *The Firebird Suite* (Stravinsky): Introduction and Dance of the Firebird; Infernal Dance; Berceuse and Finale. New York P.O. Philips Mono ABE10157 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From Philips A01307L (1/60).

I should have mentioned, when reviewing the reissue of Stravinsky's own *Firebird* last month, that he included in his selection from the ballet score two more numbers than we usually hear—a Pas de deux and the Princesses' dance with the magic apples. On the present seven-inch, presumably taken from the same tapes, these two extra numbers are dropped, and also the Princesses' Horovod, so that we are left with a selection that is just one number short of the usual suite. It is a good deal of music to get on to one EP disc, and the sound is rather shrill; nevertheless it is a very economical way of getting an idea of how Stravinsky himself takes this long-suffering score—too often souped up to make a conductor's holiday. J.N.

BRUNO WALTER. *Symphonies*. (a) No. 25, K.183; (b) No. 28, K.200; (c) No. 29, K.201 (Mozart). *Columbia* S.O. Philips Mono GBL5502 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). (a) and (b) from ABR4000 (6/57); (c) appears for the first time in this country.

BRUNO WALTER. (a) *Concerto for violin and 'cello*, Op. 102; (b) *Variations on a Theme by Haydn, "St. Anthony Chorale"* (Brahms). *Stern (violin), Rose ('cello), New York P.O.* Philips Mono ABL3280 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). (a) from GBR6534 (4/59); (b) from ABE10066 (8/58).

BRUNO WALTER. (a) *Siegfried Idyll* (Wagner). (b) *Don Juan; Death and Transfiguration* (Richard Strauss). *New York P.O.* Philips Mono GBL5504 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). (a) appears for the first time in this country. (b) from ABR4058 (4/57).

The first of Bruno Walter's discs contains three of the most captivating of Mozart's symphonies, and since one performance on the record appears for the first time, perhaps I may make that an excuse to comment on all this Mozart conducting more fully than we usually do with reissues, J.N., in the original review of two of them, found Walter's style over-romantic, with too much sentiment—and even brought in *Sturm und Drang* and *Werther*. In fact, he damned these performances utterly. I want, not to contradict him, but to express a different view.

While it may be true to call Walter's Mozart conducting romantic, the adjective tends to mislead in that it suggests a lack of freshness, a Wagnerian's view of Mozart. But Walter is far too great an artist (and Mozartian) for that, and these performances are to me as young and fresh as the music itself. I find it difficult, too, to dismiss an artist who plays music with such evident love for every phrase, for every shade and implication it contains.

I do not mean to suggest that this is necessarily the most perfect way to conduct Mozart nor is it, in fact, my own idea of Mozart interpretation. But the important thing, surely, is that Walter is an artist of such greatness that he can make one give oneself up to his artistry, for the time anyway, and there are few, very few, such

artists in the world at any one moment. Fashions change. As recently as just before the last war Walter was held to be a supreme Mozart conductor. Now the rage is for a quite different style. All right, as long as there is still a great conductor at the desk. But give me Walter every time rather than the uninspired time-beating that all too often passes for Mozart interpretation these days.

These performances gave me almost unalloyed pleasure, simply because I was listening to such artistry, only the first movement of No. 25 disturbing me by what I thought disconcerting speed variation. In No. 25 only the Minuet repeats are made; in the others, the first half of each finale is repeated as well. The sound is excellent. In fact, I recommend this disc to all but the very pure.

The coupling of Brahms's *Double Concerto* with his *St. Anthony Variations* needs little more than a mention, for this superb performance of the concerto (about which nobody is likely to disagree) is still in the catalogue anyway, complete on a 10-inch disc. But it is obviously a good idea to issue major works in a number of different forms, to suit the varying requirements of home library builders, and this issue is to be welcomed. The *Double Concerto* is notoriously a difficult work to bring off successfully—nine performances out of ten start out with high hopes and end with disappointment—but here, for repeated pleasure, is just about the greatest I have ever heard, and I do beg all Brahms lovers not to overlook it. The actual sound of the Variations is less good, thin and sometimes strident, and I would advise going for some other version of these, buying the 10-inch record of the Concerto (Philips GBR6534).

The remaining Walter disc is less successful still in the way of sound, and my copy had a really dreadful swish at the start of *Death and Transfiguration*, disastrous to enjoyment of the music. *Don Juan* suffers from poor climax sound (and a faint sense of unsteadiness at the end). The *Siegfried Idyll*, however, is a most beautiful performance in entirely satisfactory sound, and since this seems to me to be the outstanding piece of the three, in every way, I much hope Philips will make it available on its own or in some more wholly recommendable coupling.

T.H.

WAGNER. (a) *Rienzi*: Overture. *Bavarian Radio S.O./Lehmann*. (b) *The Flying Dutchman*: Overture. *Berlin Radio S.O./Fricsay*. (c) *Lohengrin*: Prelude to Act 1. *Bavarian Radio S.O./E. Jochum*. (d) *The Mastersingers*: Prelude to Act 1. *Württemberg State Orch./Lehmann*. D.G.G. Hellman Mono LDP20590 (12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 3s. 2d. P.T.). (e) *Lohengrin* DG17005 (11/58). (f) *Die Walküre* DG17022 (6/60) and (d) from DGM19047 (4/67). Item (c) is new.

MOLINARI-PRADELLI. *The Barber of Seville* (Rossini): Overture. V.S.O. Philips Mono SBF188 (7 in., 15s. 3d. plus 1s. 8d. P.T.). From GBR0523 (12/58).

SIR JOHN BARBIROLI. *Elmont Overture* (Beethoven). *Halle Orch.* H.M.V. Mono 7P233 (7 in., 1s. 3d. plus 1s. 8d. P.T.). From DB21139 (12/50).

These records of overtures are led by the D.G.G. disc called "Wagner: Overtures and Preludes", with four different conductors, all good Wagnerians, and some satisfying performances and recording. I thought Lehmann could have made more of the magical trumpet A, swelling and dying, at the start of *Rienzi*, but that apart,

his performance is well-played and enjoyable. Fricsay gives a good account of the *Flying Dutchman*, even if it isn't quite the most sheerly exciting one I have ever heard. Jochum does the *Lohengrin* Act I Prelude most movingly and Leitner winds up with a sound *Mastersingers* Prelude. A recommendable collection and a good record.

Molinari-Pradelli brings off Rossini's *Barber of Seville* enjoyably and the sound is excellent; but since this is one of Philips' "Musical Gems" series we have a turn-over in the middle of the music. And what a bad one. The music just fizzles out at the end of the side and this, I suggest, is too casual to be tolerable.

Much better in this way is the H.M.V., "Your Kind of Music" disc of the *Egmont* Overture, where the turn-over, while inevitably tiresome, is reasonably managed. The recording dates from at least 1950 and I wasn't surprised to find some lack of thrill in the climax sound; nevertheless, remembering its date, it isn't at all bad. **Barbirolli** conducts a fiery, intense performance at a speed that rather reminds me of Toscanini's record of the same piece.

T.H.

INSTRUMENTAL

HERBERT SCHWEITZER. (a) *Prelude in C major*, BWV 581; (b) *Chorale Prelude*, "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ", BWV 604; (c) *Prelude in D major*, BWV 532 (Bach). **Schweitzer** (organ). Philips Mono ABE10066 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). Items (a and c) from ABL3106 (4/58); (b) from ABL3197 (12/57).

DRUJAN/SIMMMS. *Caprice Viennais: Tambouris Chinois: The Old Refrain: Midnight Bells* (Kreisler). **Drujan** (violin), **Simms** (piano). Mercury Mono XEP9017 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From MAA11007 (5/59).

I fear that the only thing these two records have in common is that I did not like them. With the best will in the world I can think of little to say in favour of this little **Schweitzer** disc. The early C major prelude by Bach is shorn of its quite presentable fugue and left on its own, immobile and wretched. The D major prelude is not much better. This too is deprived of its fugue, but it seems the two pieces may not have been intended for each other. Nevertheless the prelude on its own does not stand up. The choral prelude is musically more interesting.

The disc of Kreisler pieces introduced me to two items hitherto unknown to me, and I wish *The Old Refrain* was still unknown to me. It must be the worst piece of music ever perpetrated by a musician of real standing. *Midnight Bells* is not much better. The other side is more attractive. It is not Mr. Drujan's fault I disliked this disc as he plays the pieces very nicely. R.F.

★WALTER GIESEKING. *Sonata No. 14, "Moonlight"* (Beethoven). **Giesecking** (piano). Columbia Stereo ESL253 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From SAX2259 (2/59).

RUDOLF FIRKUSNY. *Impromptus* (Schubert): D.890, No. 2 in E flat major; D.935, No. 2 in A flat major. **Firkusny** (piano). Philips Mono SBF198 (7 in., 15s. 5d. plus 1s. 8d. P.T.). From NBL5014 (11/55).

WILHELM KEMPF. *Piano Works* (Chopin): Scherzo No. 3, Op. 39; Berceuse, Op. 57; Impromptu No. 1, Op. 29; Barcarolle, Op. 60; Nocturne No. 3, Op. 9. **Kempf** (piano). Decca Mono BR3026 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5451 (3/59).

I could not see at first that stereo was adding anything to **Giesecking's** *Moonlight* Sonata until at the end of the first movement it seemed that the treble was coming out of

one speaker and the bass from the other! However more attractive differences appeared in the finale, in which the louder passages certainly had an additional realism. **Giesecking**, perhaps I should add for the benefit of new readers, is wonderfully poetic in the first movement, almost too slow and painstaking in the minuet, and brilliant in a restrained way in the finale. **Firkusny** recorded all eight of Schubert's Impromptus in 1955 on a single disc, and the two reissued now are beautifully played. The E flat in particular glitters irresistibly. There is some surface noise on the other, but not enough to matter much. Philips mis-name these works on both sleeve and label; the one from the first set is in E flat, not A flat, and the one from the second set is No. 2 in A flat, not No. 3. The **Kempf** disc is a selection from a Chopin disc of recent origin, itself a selection. He is at his best in the more reflective pieces such as the *Berceuse*, but the big *Barcarolle* goes splendidly too. There are perhaps more exhilarating performances of the scherzo, but this is a fine disc, well recorded.

R.F.

CHORAL AND SONG

PURCELL. *I Love and I Must. The Blessed Virgin: Expostulation—Tell me, some Pitying Angel. Upon a Quiet Conscience—Close Thine Eyes. Cantelo* (sop.). **Bevan** (bar.). **Malcolm** (harpsichord). Top Rank Mono 15/004 (11s. 3d. plus 3s. 8d. P.T.). From XRK508 (10/59).

This is a useful and attractive reissue of part of the "Homage to Henry Purcell" issued in the form of a two-disc album last year. April Cantelo's fine performance of the Blessed Virgin's *Expostulation*, and her excellent singing in *I Love and I must* are well set off by the duet *Upon a Quiet Conscience*, in which she is joined by Maurice Bevan. George Malcolm is the expert and capable continuo player.

D.S.

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD. *Kindertotenlieder* (Mahler): *Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgehn; Nun seh' ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen; Wenn dela Mutterlein; Oft denk' ich sie sind nur ausgegangen; In diesem Wetter!* **Flagstad** (sop.), V.P.O./Boult. Decca Mono BR3031 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5395 (6/58).

For anyone who already owns the *Song of a Wayfarer* (which was originally coupled with this recording on a 12-inch LP) in some other version, Fischer-Dieskau's perhaps, this new disc at just under a pound is a splendid value. Today, we weigh **Flagstad's** interpretation against Ferrer's and Fischer-Dieskau's, but the day will come, I feel sure, when collectors will want to own everything she recorded, just for the sake of her voice. That glorious voice is heard here in a very fine recording, and Sir Adrian and the Vienna Philharmonic form a happy combination. And in any case, Flagstad sings these particular songs most beautifully; Lieder on this scale finds in her a fine and sensitive interpreter. Incredibly that she was 62 at the time.

A.P.

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ALBERTO EREDE. *Turandot* (Puccini): Popolo di Pekino Gira la cote, gira, gira; Perche tarda la luna? O giovinetto; Signore, ascolta! Non piangere, Liu; Ah! per l'ultima volta; O China! Ho una casa nell' Honan; In questa reggia, or son mille anni e mille; Nessun dorma; Tu che di gel sei cinta; C'era negli occhi tuoi. *Tebaldi* (sop.), *del Monaco* (ten.), *Giordano* (bar.), *Corena* (base), *Zaccaia* (base), *Ercolani* (ten.), *Carlin* (ten.), *Borkh* (sop.). Chorus and Orch. of the *Santa Cecilia Academy*. Decca Mono LXT5549: ★Stereo SXL2175 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d P.T., Mono from LXT5128-30 (12/55), Stereo from SXL2078-80 (4/56).

TULLIO SERAFIN. *Madama Butterfly* (Puccini): Bimba dagli occhi . . . Vogliatemi bene; Un bel dia, vedremo; Scuoti quella fronda di ciliegio; Io so che alle sue pene . . . Addio florito asil; Con onor muore. *Tebaldi* (sop.), *Bergonzi* (ten.), *Cossotto* (m.-sop.), *Sordello* (bar.), *Santa Cecilia Academy* Orch. Decca Mono BR3023 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). Mono from LXT5468-70 (2/56).

FRANCO CAPUANA. *La Fanciulla del West* (Puccini): Che faranno i vecchi miei la lontana . . . Jim, perche piangi? Dove eravamo? . . . lavami e saro bianco come neve; Ti voglio bene, Minnie . . . Minnie, dalla mia casa son partiti . . . Laggi nel soledad; Siete pronte? Ch'ella mi creda libero e lontano. *Tebaldi* (sop.), *del Monaco* (ten.), *MacNeil* (bar.), *Tozzi* (base), *di Palma* (ten.), *Giorgetti* (bar.), *Peruzzi* (bar.), *Cazzato* (bar.), *Guagni* (ten.), *Carlin* (ten.), *Mercuri* (ten.), *Moresi* (base), *Santa Cecilia Academy Chorus* and Orch. Decca Mono BR3022 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5463-5 (12/56).

My quarrel with Decca's *Turandot* highlights, conducted by *Erede*, is more a matter of contents than casting. "Nessun dorma" and "Tu che di gel" are both faded at the end; they could have been extended to acceptable finishes if the final duet (which starts in the middle of "Del primo pianto") and chorus had been omitted—they are not highlights of the opera for me, in fact aren't even by Puccini, and aren't particularly well sung. On the other hand Inge Borkh tussles victoriously with "In questa reggia", Tebaldi touches me a good deal in "Signore, ascolta", and the Trio of the Masks is exceptionally well sung (a pity too that the whole of this wonderful scene couldn't be included). The first side comprises the first scene of the opera, complete to the disappearance of the execution procession, and from "Signore, ascolta" to the end of the act—good selection. The stereo is impressive, the mono recording rather oppressive in places; a very striking cover picture of the three Masks.

The ten-inch *Butterfly* selection is a good bargain, though as last month I wish that the love duet could start earlier, at "Viene la sera". I enjoy Bergonzi and Tebaldi a good deal in this scene, though you may think that *Serafin* drags out the slushy element to excess (but that's what a love duet is for). Fiorenza Cossotto partners Tebaldi to admiration in the Flower Duet. "Un bel di" starts straight in, without the lead-in ("Weeping? and why" at Sadler's Wells), and is given a slow fade at the end. The acoustic is particularly attractive, with a pronounced stereo illusion in the love duet.

If you've hesitated to acquire Decca's complete *Girl of the Golden West*, this highlights record is an excellent substitute, and will probably make you hanker for the whole thing. Like A.P., who reviewed it rapturously, I was bowled out by Decca's *Girl*, and bowled out again listening to these excerpts: Giorgio Tozzi jerking the tears as he sings about the doggies back home; Tebaldi magnificent in the Bible

scene, and the card game, and Minnie's final appeal to the miners—this role might have been made for her; Cornell McNeil very convincing as Minnie's rival suitor, and Del Monaco of whom we hear rather little. *Capuana* conducts the enthralling music with great vitality, and the mono recording (previously I had only heard the marvellous stereo) is extremely rich and atmospheric. W.S.M.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN. *Il Trovatore* (Verdi): Che più t'arresti . . . Tacea la notte placida; Di geloso amer; Vedli le fosche . . . Strida la vampa; Mai reggendo all'aspro assalto; Perigliarti; Di quella pira; Siam giunti . . . Timor di me; D'amor sull'all'rose . . . Misericore; Mira, di acerbe lagrime . . . Colui vivrà; Si, la stancheza m'oppriume . . . Ai nostri monti; Ti secosta Villa (m.-sop.), *Callas* (sop.), *Panerai* (bar.), *di Stefano* (ten.), *Barbieri* (m.-sop.), *Ercolani* (ten.), Chorus and Orch. of *La Scala*. Columbia Mono S3CX1682 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). From 33CX1483-5 (11/57).

ALBERTO EREDE. *Il Trovatore* (Verdi): Vedli le fosche . . . Chi del gitano; Strida la vampa; Il Balen del suo sorriso; Or C'adì . . . Squilli, echegei; Ah, si, ben mio col'essere; Di quella pira; D'amor sull'all'rose; Misericore; Prima che d'altri vivere. *Simionato* (m.-sop.), *Savarese* (bar.), *Tozzi* (base), *del Monaco* (ten.), *Tebaldi* (sop.), *Florence May Festival Chorus* and Orch. Decca Mono BR3024 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5260-2 (11/58).

TULLIO SERAFIN. *Rigoletto* (Verdi): Quel vecchio mandorlato . . . Pari Namor. Questo padrone mio . . . Figlia! Mio padrone! Deh non parlare al misero Gobbi (bar.), *Zaccaia* (base), *Callas* (sop.), *La Scala* Orch. Columbia Mono SEL1650 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From 33CX1324-6 (2/56).

Trovatore is riddled with highlights, and even on a 12-inch disc something's likely to be omitted. On the Columbia record there's no "Il balen" (our grandfathers would have thought this a *sine qua non* *impossibile*), and no Azucena's "Racconto", and no "Ah! si ben mio". But the sides are full already. The strength of the cast is Callas, Panerai, Ercolani (the most euphonious-voiced *comprimario* in the business, surely?), and *Karajan*, a really great Verdi conductor. So we miss "Il balen" very much, but not the other *lacunes* mentioned, are glad to have so much of Leonora and Di Luna, and begrudge the space occupied by the wobbly Azucena ("Stride la vampa" is all trills!) and the stodgy, unmelodious Manrico (both verses of "Di quella pira", and as many interpolated top Cs as you could want). *Karajan*'s direction is masterly; again and again he finds the meaning of the situation. But I had better add the rider that P.H.-W. and I do not agree about *Karajan* or *di Stefano* in this set. The Decca highlights are duller. "Il balen" is here, but throatily sung; "Tacea la notte", in which Tebaldi sings so movingly, is not; *del Monaco* gives us a rip-roaring "Di quella pira" (again both verses), but also a nagging, unlovesome "Ah! si ben mio". *Simionato* is a much preferable Azucena. *Erede* draws lively choral singing in "Or co dadi" (which does not mean "Good heavens, Father") and "Miserere", but inevitably sounds uninteresting after *Karajan*.

The EP extract from *Serafin's Rigoletto* gives the beginning of the second scene: Rigoletto alone, then with sinister Sparafucile; Rigoletto's great monologue, superbly sung by Gobbi, but split into two parts, and a tantalizing fragment from the duet with Gilda—it stops short of "Ah! veglia, o donna", which is the bit I enjoy most in this performance. Most enjoyable—until it stops. W.S.M.

TEATRO DI SAN CARLO DI NAPOLI (a) *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni): Gli aranci olezzano; *Regina Coeli*; *Intermezzo*, *Mancini* (sop.), *Cartellani* (cont.), *I Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo): (b) *Don din don*; (c) *Intermezzo*, *Chorus*, (d) *Rigoletto* (Verdi); Zitti, zitti; Duca, Duca? Scorrendo uniti remota via, *Tucker* (ten.), *Pandano* (ten.), *Giorgetti* (bar.), *Pasella* (base), (e) *Don Pasquale* (Donizetti); Che interminabile andirivieni *Chorus*, (f) *Linda di Chamonix* (Donizetti): O tu che regoli gli umani eventi; Viva viva! *Taddel* (bar.), *Stella* (sop.), *Corsi* (m.-sop.), *Barbieri* (cont.), (g) *Mosè* (Rossini): Ah! Dell'empio al potere feroci; Allegro moderato from *Dance No. 1 of Ballet*, Act 3; Dal tuo stellato soglio Napoli, *Rossi Lemani* (base), *Mancini* (sop.), *Danielli* (m.-sop.), *Lazzari* (ten.), Chorus and Orchestra of the *Teatro di San Carlo* di Napoli cond. *Rapallo* (a, b, c), *Molinari-Pradelli* (d, e), *Serafin* (f, g). Philips Mono GBL5519 (12 in., 16s. 11d. plus 5s. 7d. P.T.). Items (a, b, d) appear for the first time in this country, (c) from ABL2526 (11/59), (e) from ABL2404-1 (12/56), (f) from A00423-5L (2/60), (g) from ABL2303-3 (12/57).

This record has not made up its mind whether to be an anthology of excerpts from the Philips recordings of lesser-known operas, or simply a mixed-bag of ensemble numbers. I can imagine the Donizetti-Rossini side appealing to those collectors who do not quite want to go in for the full sets: there is enjoyable music here. *Mosè* is represented by the opening number, starting with the little march, and going on to a Hebrew chorus, with a short address by Mosè's telling his people not to despair, and by a very pretty dance in honour of Iris. And then (with not enough of a pause to divide it from the dance) we plunge into the noble splendours of the Prayer. But be warned that *Rossi-Lemani* is an inadequate Moses. The Servants' Chorus from *Don Pasquale* comes off nicely; so does the Act 1 finale of *Linda di Chamonix*. But in the Brindisi which opens the last act of that opera the chorus are insensitive to the composer's effects of dynamic contrast, and the recording is not clean.

The other side is all quite decent, and the opening of *Cavalleria Rusticana* more than that: there is a real sense of atmosphere about it. Philips have not given any credit to the San Carlo chorusmaster; but whoever he is, he can feel pleased with the results here shown. A.P.

ERICH KLEIBER. *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart): Ciasche, disci; Se a caso Madama; Se vuol ballare, La vendetta, oh, la vendetta; Non so più cosa son; cosa faccio; Non più andrai; Porgi amor; Poi che sapete; Sull'aria; Aprite un po' quegli occhi; Deh vieni, non tardar; Questo giorno di tormenti, *Stepli* (base), *Güden* (sop.), *Corena* (base), *Dance* (sop.), *della Casa* (sop.), *Felbermayer* (sop.), *Rossini-Majdan* (m.-sop.), *Dickle* (ten.), *Meyer-Wolf* (ten.), *Poell* (bar.), *Proegelboed* (base), V.P.O. Decca Mono BR3021 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT5008-9 (11/58).

CLEMENS KRAUSS. *Salomè* (Richard Strauss): Tanz mich, Salomè . . . Dance of the Seven Veils; Es ist kein Laut zu vernehmen, *Patsatz* (ten.), *König* (m.-sop.), *Geltz* (sop.), *Braun* (bar.), V.P.O. Decca Mono BR3021 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10d. P.T.). From LXT2363-4 (8/54).

This is a good ten-inch potted *Figaro*, and the performance is by now a classic. I'm sorry that *Kleiber* never allowed *Danco* or *Della Casa* the appoggiaturas that are so necessary in "Non so più" and "Porgi, amor" (the blunt endings sound like dropped aitches, only not so characteristic), and I regret that he started "Aprite un po'" so meekly—this is the voice of revolution! "Deh vieni" is as beautifully sung, by *Güden*, as any performance I have heard since Elisabeth Schumann. "Questo giorno", if you don't recognize it, is the final ensemble, after Rosina has forgiven her husband.

The only highlights in *Salomè*, from a

commercial point of view, are the Dance and the final scene. Here they are, in the famous **Clemens Krauss** recording. Goltz is steadier than usual, but her voice quickly creates listener-fatigue, with its individual timbre emphasized by an uncomfortable balance that stifles the orchestra and thrusts the singers under your nose.

W.S.M.

JOSEF KRIPS. *Don Giovanni* (Mozart): Madamina, il catalogo e questo; La ci darem la mano; Ah! fuggi il traditor!; Or sai, chi l'onore; Della sua pace; Finch'han dal vino; Batti, batti, o bel Masetto; Deh vieni alla finestra; Bel carino; Il mio tesoro; Questo e il fin. *Corenza* (bass), *Stepi* (bass), *Gueden* (sop.), *della Casa* (sop.), *Dance* (sop.), *Dermota* (ten.), *Berry* (bar.), *V.P.O.* Decca Mono BR3025 (10 in., 15s. plus 4s. 10 1/2d. P.T.). From LXT5103-6 (10/65).

This 10-inch *Don Giovanni* disc is a cut-down version of the 12-inch LXT5443, which is in turn a selection of "highlights" from Decca's complete recording of the opera on LXT5103-6. Reviewing the 12-inch record, A.P. regretted the absence of "Non mi dir"; I echo his grievance, and in the present case mourn the disappearance of "Mi tradi!", for which I would willingly swap "Ah fuggi il traditor!" and the Champagne Aria. Still, you can't get everything on to a single record, and there is a wealth of lovely music here, splendidly sung and beautifully recorded. D.C.

HISTORICAL

TWENTY GREAT TENORS. Enrico Caruso, *Cavalier Rusticana*: Siciliana (1903). Francisco Tamagno, *Il Trovatore*: Die quella pira (1903). Lucien Muratore, *Romeo et Juliette*: Ah, leve-toi soleil (c. 1910). Giovanni Martinelli, *I Pagliacci*: Vesti la giubba (? 1928-9). Leon Escalais, *Samson et Dalila*: Arretez, O mes frères (1905). Edmond Clement, *La Dame Blanche*: Ah, quel plaisir (? 1905). Giovanni Zenatello, *Otello*: Ora e per sempre addio (?). Fernando de Lucia, *Werther*: Ah non me ridestan (1913-16). Hippolito Lazaro, *I Puritani*: Vieni fra questa baccia (1916-20). John O'Sullivan, *Otello*: Esultate (? 1926). Tito John, *Tosca*: Recondita armonia (? 1920). Arturo Pertile, *Fedora*: Amor ti vieta (c. 1927). Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, *Puritani*: A te o cara (1920). Riccardo Togni, *Turandot*: Non so direver Liu (c. 1930). Leo Slezak, *William Tell*: O Mathilde (1908). Alessandro Bonci, *La Fanciulla del West*: Ch'ella non creda (1913). John McCormack, *Tosca*: E lucevan le stelle (1908). Francesco Vigna, *Profeta*: Sopra Berta (1906). Francesco Marconi, *Lucia di Lammermoor*: Tu che a Dio (1908). Amedeo Bassi, *Siberia*: Incontra per via (1906). T.A.P. Mono T303 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.).

I imagine the most immediate reaction of most collectors on scanning this list of "20 Great Tenors" will be one of amazement at the non-inclusion of Gigli's name. On any count this must be considered regrettable, for despite Gigli's occasional faults of style, he was without any doubt one of the very greatest tenors of this century, and some of his recordings are of surpassing beauty, and worthy of inclusion in any company. On the other hand, it seems difficult on the showing of the examples given here, or on the known history of the artists, to justify the space given to the examples by Lazaro, O'Sullivan and possibly one or two others.

I have always felt that Escalais has been over-praised in recent years. He undoubtedly possessed a powerful voice with strong top notes and could execute a neat shake, but his intonation is always suspect, and the voice is devoid of real beauty of timbre. Clément's "Quel plaisir d'être soldat" sounds like an early Pathé recording, since the quality of sound is primitive, and the piano is used for accompaniment.

It is not really representative of this delightful singer. The unpublished Tamagno "Di quella pira" is interesting, and the high C's (probably B's at correct speed) are held longer than in the published version. Caruso's Zonophone "Siciliana" is the best of this series from a recording point of view, and dates from early 1902, whether before the G. & T. recordings of March 1902 or just after is still a point of debate among collectors. Martinelli's "Vesti la giubba" is not the Victor recording of 1927, but is certainly early electric, and may be either an Edison or the soundtrack from an early "talkie".

The notes call for some correction, when the writer says, "The tenor voice from the days of Monteverdi and Peri through the castrato period to modern times has been universally worshipped . . . Whether it was the castrati Porpora or Farinelli, or Mario, Campanini, Duprez or Rubini, each had his own group of hero worshippers". But Porpora and Farinelli were not tenors but male sopranis! The whole object of the barbarous operation was to preserve the range and quality of the unbroken voice. In other words their range was exactly an octave higher than in the case of a tenor.

One other point which cannot pass is the reference to De Lucia, who, it is stated, had a range extending to F above high C, and could also descend to the bass clef. I know of no evidence to suggest this, certainly there are no recordings of De Lucia which would support such a claim, while, on the other hand, Fred Gaisberg, who recorded him on many occasions, wrote that De Lucia had a short voice, which he used with exquisite skill.

However, the notes can safely be ignored, and the record offers good value, and contains some examples of fine singing, which are difficult to find elsewhere. J.F.

LEONID SOBINOV. *Russalka* (Dargomizhsky): The Prince's Cavatina (022242, 1910). Eugene Onegin (Tchaikovsky): I love you, Olga (022243, 1910); Whither have you gone (022140, 1908-9). *May Night* (Rimsky-Korsakov): Sleep my Beauty (022162, 1908-9). *Snow Maiden* (Rimsky-Korsakov): The joyous day departs (022199, 1910). *Halka* (Moniuszko): The wind walls (022197, 1910). *Dobrynya Nikititch* (Gretschulnikov): The flowers bloom (022150, 1908-9). *Raphael* (Arensky): My heart trembles (022200, 1910). *Don Pasquale* (Donizetti): Cercherò lontana terra (022202, 1910). *Lohengrin* (Wagner): Mein lieber Schwan (022137, 1908-9). *Die Fledermaus* (Eck): Eh! ne crois pas (022198, 1910). *Manon* (Massenet): En fermant me reveller (022138, 1908-9). *Les Pecheurs de Perles* (Bizet): Je crois entendre (022161, 1908-9). *Ton cœur n'a pas compris* (024037, 1910). *With Antonina Neshdanova*. **Leonid Sobinov** (tenor). Decca Mono R19 (12 in., 28s. 6d. plus 9s. 6d. P.T.).

From the time of his début at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, in 1897, until the outbreak of the first world war, Sobinov was the idol of Russian audiences, and he also appeared with success at La Scala, Milan, and other great European opera houses, including a Beecham season in London in 1913. He had a lyric tenor voice of fine quality which he used with great skill, and in the excerpts from Russian operas, which are given on this disc he is inimitable, singing with great authority and charm. The aria from *Raphael* is particularly delightful. In the French and Italian schools the handicap of singing in Russian, with its rather dry sounding vowels, is too great, and although the voice is still beautiful, and the technique equal to the demands made on it, the overall effect is slightly disappointing. There are better versions in every case, and the recordings have only a certain documentary interest as showing how the greatest Russian tenor of his generation sang them. The transfers are very well done indeed, and the disc is good value for money, and is a most welcome addition to the growing library of re-recordings of singers from the so-called golden age.

J.F.

PASSING NOTES

By ARTHUR JACOBS

Nicolai Malko held out the record in its sleeve—to judge by its front, a normal American sleeve of the Angel label. But the reverse of the sleeve, with the usual notes on the music, was in Japanese. It is such records as these, he told me, which are contributing to the prodigious Japanese interest in western symphonic and operatic music, which he had lately experienced as a guest conductor of the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra.

I told Mr. Malko that I had already heard of this Japanese enthusiasm through such globetrotters as the Amadeus Quartet and Sir Malcolm Sargent, who remarked to me the other day that there are more performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony every year in Tokyo than in London. "Why talk about a year?" said Mr. Malko. "Just take the seventeen days or so that I was in Tokyo. In that time they had Handel's *Messiah* five or six times, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* twice, the Bach Mass in B minor, the Verdi Requiem and Brahms' *Deutsches Requiem*, a Perosi oratorio, a Mozart Mass, and about seven performances of the Ninth Symphony. While I was conducting the Ninth in a television studio,

someone else was conducting it in a concert-hall."

Since Japanese orchestras can master *The Rite of Spring* and Japanese audiences show enthusiasm for it, no great prophetic gifts are needed to forecast that in a few years, when symphonic recording becomes established in Japan, we shall have some mettlesome competition on records from there. The Japanese choristers, by the way, sing the finale of the Ninth Symphony in German.

Mr. Malko and his wife currently spend eight or nine months of the year in Australia where he is conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. I am mildly surprised he has not been recording with it, as Sir Eugene Goossens did for H.M.V. It is typical of the Malkos' interest in the broad humanities (and not merely in music) that not only is Malko proud of his few phrases of Japanese, but his wife took advantage of a brief visit to New Zealand to learn a snatch of Maori.

Last year Mr. Malko went back to Russia for the first time since 1928. Arriving to conduct the Leningrad Philharmonic, he found some of the same players as when he was the

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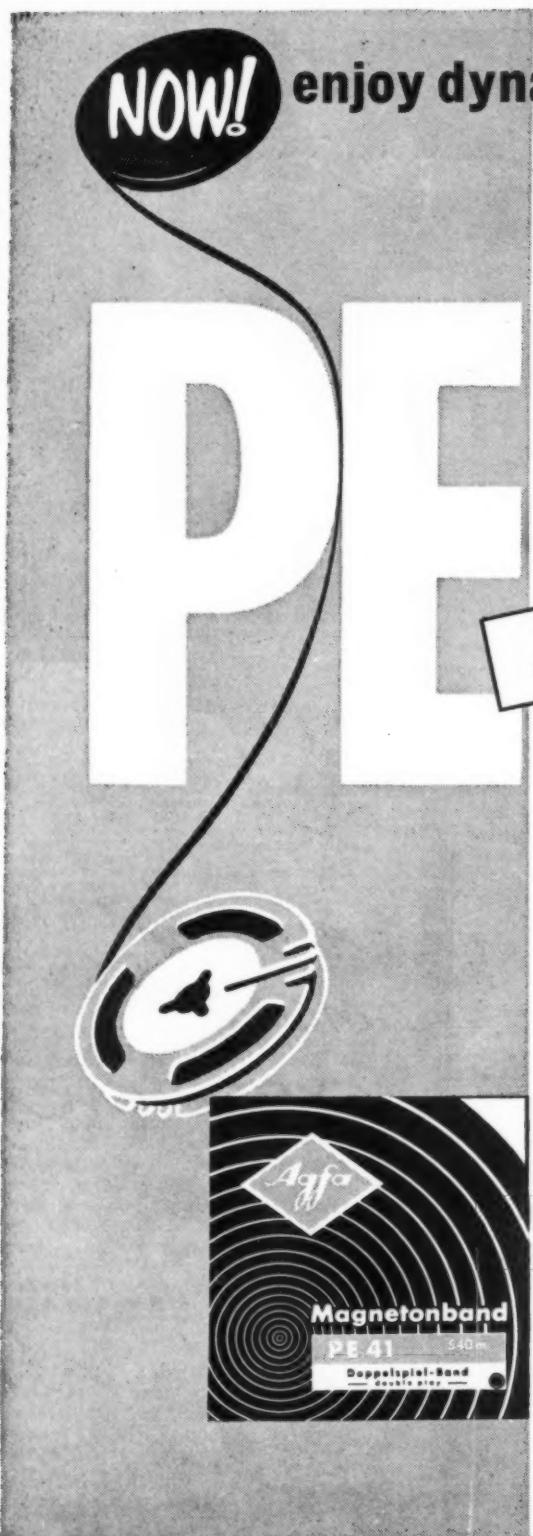
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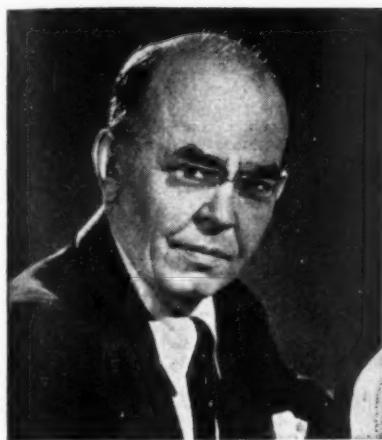
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Nicolai Malko

orchestra's director before leaving Russia! Eugene Mravinsky, the distinguished Soviet conductor familiar to us from this orchestra's records, was a pupil of Malko's. Throughout his absence from Russia, Malko has kept up correspondence with friends there, and found himself movingly welcomed on this return visit. But his Western records are not, of course, known in Russia as they are in Japan. Such records are not normally on the market in Russia, though occasionally (Mr. Malko tells me) they are broadcast. Mr. Malko has been conducting in London for the B.B.C. in wide-ranging programmes—from Bruckner to the young Australian, Malcolm Williamson—which must have pleased a man who is too easily typed (in this narrower-and-narrower age) as a specialist in Russian music.

The party celebrating the tenth birthday of our valued contemporary, the magazine *Opera*, was appropriately held at Covent Garden Opera House. Such veterans as Eva Turner and Norman Allin (among the sixteen soloists for whom Vaughan Williams wrote his *Serenade to Music* and who sing it on record) were there, as well as Joan Sutherland, Geraint Evans and other stars of today. I took the opportunity of congratulating **Geraint Evans** on his superb triple role in *The Tales of Hoffman* at Covent Garden. It is without resentment that he discusses the fact that, though in *Peter Grimes* at Covent Garden he sang the major role of Balstrode, in the new recording he sings only the minor part of Ned Keene. "But when you get a small part you make it a big part," he remarked; "Tyrone Guthrie taught me that."

Mr. Evans is again engaged for Glyndebourne this year, in the title-role of Verdi's *Falstaff* as well as in Mozart, and will be performing at the San Francisco Opera next autumn. Though still interested in concerts as well as opera, he prefers not to mix the two. Here is a voice I would like to hear more on records. There are, of course, the Gilbert and Sullivan performances under Sir Malcolm Sargent; but I sympathize with Mr. Evans' reluctance to exploit that vein too much, lest collectors (in America particularly) come to think of him as a Savoyard rather than a Covent Gardener.

A critic's occupational handicap is inability to be in two places at once; and through going to hear Menuhin at the Festival Hall in the recently discovered early concerto of Bartók I missed the first Wigmore Hall recital by **Aafje Heynis**. But I was curious to know more about this young Dutch contralto who

has earned the praise of our review columns and who, exceptionally these days, has seemed more interested in oratorio than in opera. "I am interested in opera," she corrected me when we met later, "but there is just not the opportunity in Holland with my type of voice. There's hardly an opera for me, except for a few like *Orfeo* or *Dido and Aeneas*. I can't sing Carmen; you need a dramatic mezzo-soprano for that."

Oratorio and its kin, anyway, appear to furnish her with a full career. The necessity for many repetitions of the same work—she will have dozens of performances of the *St. Matthew Passion* before Easter—does not irk her. A type of performance she enjoys is the Organ Concert (that is, organ and soloists) held in church which is, she tells me, an important and well-attended part of Dutch musical life. She speaks and sings good English, and studied with a Scottish clergyman in Holland the pronunciation needed for the Burns poem in Britten's *A Charm of Lullabies*, which was on her Wigmore Hall programme. The praise she received from *The Times* for this very item must have been a fitting reward.

She much admires English singers: "they have such a very good breath". And when we talked, perhaps inevitably, about Kathleen Ferrier, I mentioned Roy Henderson's point about the part played in the voice by a singer's purely physical attributes. "Yes," said Miss Heynis, "you can't make it, you have it."

Both Denis Stevens and Desmond Shaw-Taylor have expressed in these columns the desire that a full written text should be available for *The Play of Daniel*, the medieval liturgical

drama which has recently been issued by Brunswick. It is with pleasure that I mention (without excusing record companies from their task of providing adequate texts!) the handsome new performing edition just published by O.U.P. at 25s. Here we have the complete score with Latin text, with an English narration written by W. H. Auden; also a translation of the Latin, notes on the staging and costumes, and many illustrations which help to make this finely-printed book a joy to handle. The editor is Noah Greenberg, who conducts the recorded performance.

Rutland Boughton was 82 when he died in January, but he was active to the last: he had given a B.B.C. talk about his choral drama *Bethlehem* only a few weeks before. To read of his attempts to establish an "English Bayreuth" (for himself and other English composers, not for Wagner) at Glastonbury almost half a century ago is, for many of us, like reading almost of the pre-history of music. Today, I suppose, our English Bayreuth is Aldeburgh. Boughton was, as I am sure Britten is, convinced of the moral seriousness of music: you would not, perhaps, expect to find that a man immersed in Arthurian and other Celtic legend would turn out to be a Marxist, but Boughton was. *The Immortal Hour* ran in London in 1922 for 216 successive nights: an operatic record still, I think. A London revival since the war, though wretchedly staged and failing to draw the public, still moved me. Two records in the current catalogue show that the Fairy Song from this work still exerts its magic. It may seem a poor reward for a long lifetime's work to be recognized by only one tune, but this is one more than many composers manage.

NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

PAUL ROBESON. "Paul Robeson at Carnegie Hall". Every time I feel the spirit: Balm in Gilead; Volvo Boat Song; Monologue from Shakespeare's "Othello"; O the silent night; Children Sing; My Curv-headed Baby; Old Man River; Goin' Home; Monologue from "Boris Godunov"; The Orphan; Christ lag in Todesbanden; Didn't my Lord deliver; Dandie; Lullaby; Oh No, John; Joe Hill; Jacob's Ladder. **Paul Robeson**, piano accompaniment by Alan Booth. Top Rank Mono 35/018 (12 in. LP, 26s. 4d. plus 8s. 7d. P.T.), + also available on TR5007 (7 in. 8s. 3d. plus 1s. 9d. P.T.).

May 9th, 1958 was a historic day in the life of Paul Robeson, for on that day, just a month after his sixtieth birthday, he made his reappearance in the Carnegie Hall, New York after a compulsory absence of eleven years. Every seat was taken and he was given a great ovation. This memorable recital was recorded and here we have the bulk of it. But quite apart from its historic value this is a record to have and to treasure for its own sake. Time has dealt very kindly with his voice. Perhaps there is not quite the same ease and certainty in the very lowest notes but there is still the wonderful resonance and quality, the sense of rhythm is as sensitive as ever and the diction is impeccable. Mr. Robeson sings the simpler songs with rather more dramatic point and emphasis than he used to do and there is a tendency to introduce an unnecessary but quite harmless "twiddly bit" occasionally.

Most of the songs are old favourites, first recorded many years ago on 78s and with them is included Othello's final monologue from Shakespeare's play, which will be particularly treasured as a memento of his acting of the role at Stratford-on-Avon shortly after this record was made.

Concert hall recordings present difficulties

which do not exist in the studio. Good balance is not easy to achieve, but here it is very lifelike, and there is the problem of applause. The ideal might have been to have included applause at the end of the last band, or perhaps at the end of each side of the record but American audiences are no better behaved than our own and they frequently start to clap before the singer has finished his last note or the accompanist his last phrase and Vanguard, the company who actually made the record, have therefore chosen the best possible course by including it at the end of each band but cutting it quite short. This record deserves to be a best-seller.

GROFE. Grand Canyon Suite. Mississippi Suite. Eastman-Rochester Orchestra cond. Howard Hanson. Mercury Mono MMA11013. *Stereo AMS16011 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.).

So far I have regarded the Slatkin-Hollywood Bowl record of the two Grofe suites (reviewed in September 1957) as the more desirable of the two identical couplings although only by a small margin. This is chiefly because there are in "Cloudburst", the last movement of *Grand Canyon*, sounds which, though very realistic, are almost deafening in the Mercury recording in mono form if the volume level be set right for the hearing of quieter passages in a largish room. The differences between stereo and mono are very well demonstrated by this stereo version of the powerful Hanson performance. I have no instrument for measuring sound precisely but here although the stereo volume is probably just as great it is far more comfortable on the ears. This is a phenomenon that I have noted before when comparing stereo

and mono recordings of the same performance and I put it down to the more realistic stereo spread. Be this as it may this new release now becomes my first choice but it is only right and fair to add that since I reviewed the Slatkin-Hollywood performance it, too, has been made available in stereo, though I have not heard it. The playing is splendid and as I have suggested before if one does not expect too much from this colourful and pictorial music it can be immensely enjoyable.

HOLLYWOOD BOWL ORCHESTRA. "España". Bolero (Ravel): Triana from "Iberia" (Albeniz); Capricho Espanol (Rimsky-Korsakov): Alborada del grancanario (Ravel). Conducted by **Felix Slatkin**. ★Stereo SP8357. Mono P8357 (10/57). "Fiesta". Aragonesa from "Carmen" (Bizet): La Paloma (Yradier): Jota Aragonesa (Glinka): La Virgen de la Macarena (Monteiro): Las Chiapanecas (arr. McRitchie): The Maids of Cadiz (Deibes): Andaluza (Granados): Jamaican Rumba (Benjamin): La Golondrina (Serradell): Granada (Lara). Conducted by **Carmen Dragon**. ★Stereo SP8355. Mono P8335 (2/58). "Symphonic Dances". Waltz from "Sleeping Beauty" (Tchaikovsky): Galop from "The Comedians" (Kabalevsky): Norwegian Dance No. 2 (Grieg): Polka from "Schwanda the Bagpiper" (Weinberger): Pavane for a dead Princess (Ravel): Sailor's Dance from "The Red Poppy" (Gliere): Farandole from "L'Arlesienne" (Bizet): Navarraise from "Le Cid" (Massenet): Pizzicato from "Sylvia" (Delibes): Sabre Dance from "Gayne" (Khachaturian): Bacchanale from "Samson and Delilah" (Saint-Saëns). Conducted by **Felix Slatkin**. ★Stereo SP8369. Mono P8369 (5/58). "Russkaya". Russian and Ludmilla Overture (Glinka): Song of The Volga Boatmen (arr. Dragon): Dance of the Buffoons from "The Snow Maiden" (Rimsky-Korsakov): Kamenol Ostrow (Rubinstein): Melodie, Op. 42, No. 3 (Tchaikovsky): Meadowland (arr. Dragon). Conducted by **Carmen Dragon**. ★Stereo SP8384. Mono P8384 (7/58). "Oriental". Procession of the Sardar from "Caucasian Sketches" (Ippolitov-Ivanov): Tambourin Chinois (Kreisler): Orientale (Cui): Turkish March from "The Ruins of Athens" (Beethoven): Song of India from "Sadko" (Rimsky-Korsakov): Kashmire Song (Woodforde-Finden): Arabian and Chinese Dances from "Casse-Noisette" (Tchaikovsky): First movement from "Ballet Egyptien" (Luquin): Persian Dance from "Khovanshchina" (Moussorgsky). **Capitol Symphony Orchestra** cond. **Carmen Dragon**. ★Stereo SP8453. Mono P8453 (2/59). "Rhapsody under the Stars". Variation No. 18 from "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini" (Rachmaninov): Rustle of Spring (Sinding): Dream of Olwen (Williams): Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (Liszt): Spellbound Concerto (Rossi): First Movement from Sonata in C major, K.545 (Mozart): Adagio from "Pathétique" (Beethoven). **Pernario** with **Hollywood Bowl Orch.** cond. **Miklos Rosza**. ★Stereo SP8494. Mono P8494 (1/60). All the above are Capitol 12 in. LPs, 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.

Here are stereo versions of six records the mono releases of which I have recommended at various dates during the last couple of years or so, either wholeheartedly or with comparatively minor reservations. Stereo improves the sound in all cases, although more in some than others. There is greater spread and spaciousness, more detail can be heard and instruments playing solos (the oboe in the Grieg dance is an obvious example) are poised more realistically.

Taking the records in order of original release "España" gives us more of Spain as seen through the eyes of foreigners than natives but is none the worse for this. Ravel's *Alborada* could with advantage have been invested with a little more gracefulness but the more spectacular items are brilliantly played. In "Fiesta" too, the outsider's view of Spain and Spanish-speaking South American countries predominates. Here, it is in such pieces as *Las Chiapanecas* from Mexico and *Lara's Granada* that the benefits of stereo are most pronounced.

When reviewing the mono version of "Symphonic Dances" in May 1958 I found a good deal of pre-echo in my advance copy, some of which was a little disturbing. This is almost entirely smoothed out in the stereo issue. The Kabalevsky gallop, Weinberger polka, Gliere Sailor's Dance and other livelier items are very exciting in the new sound and Tchaikovsky's ever-popular waltz is superbly lush.

"Russkaya" also gains from stereo but desirable as many of the pieces are, the conductor's arrangement of the *Song of the Volga Boatmen* seems more long-winded than ever and does not strike me as particularly appropriate either.

Although the fifth of these six discs, "Oriental", is by the Capitol and not the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra it is convenient to include it in the same group for the conductor is Carmen Dragon and the programme presented is similar in character to those presented by the Hollywood Orchestra. As I said in February 1959 I feel that some of the pieces, notably the two dances from *Casse-Noisette*, could with advantage have been omitted in favour of pieces that have been recorded less frequently. Be that as it may both playing and recording are admirable throughout.

My objection to "Rhapsody under the Stars" expressed in the review of the mono version last January, and which may be summarised as a preference for performances in the form and context conceived by the composer, apply equally to the stereo version despite the enhanced sound and the smoothing out of a bit of harshness in one or two of the piano notes in the mono version, my copy of which, however, as I said in January, is only a test pressing so these may well therefore have been dealt with equally successfully in the finished pressings of the mono release.

CHORAL MUSIC. "The Lord's Prayer". The Lord's Prayer (Robertson): Come, Come ye saints (Robertson): Blessed are they that mourn (Brahms): O, My Father (Gates): How great the wisdom and the love (McIntyre): Holy, Holy, Holy (Gounod): 148th Psalm (Holst): For unto us a child is born from "Messiah" (Handel): David's Lamentation (Billings): Londonderry Air (arr. Baldwin): Battle Hymn of the Republic (Wilbouky). **Mormon Tabernacle Choir with Philadelphia Orchestra** cond. **Ormandy**, and organ. Philips Mono ABL3303 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). **"The Beloved Choruses".** Sheep may safely graze (Bach): Jesu, Joy of man's desire (Bach): A mighty fortress is our God (Bach): In deepest grief (Bach): The Heavens are telling (Haydn): To Music (Schubert): Glory, Glory, Glory (Rimsky-Korsakov): Oh great hills (Sibelius): Hallelujah Chorus (Handel). **Mormon Tabernacle Choir with Philadelphia Orchestra** cond. **Ormandy**. Philips Mono ABL3304 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). **"Reflections".** Lullaby (Brahms): Ich liebe dich (Grieg): Serenade (Schubert): None but the lonely heart (Tchaikovsky): Songs my mother taught me (Dvorak): Torna a Sorrento (Curtis): Londonderry Air: Goin' Home, arr. from Largo of "New World Symphony" (Dvorak): On wings of song (Mendelssohn): At Dawning (Cadam). **Roger Wagner Chorale**. Capitol Mono P8491: ★Stereo SP8491 (12 in., 30s. plus 9s. 9d. P.T.). **"Russian Fair".** **Don Cossack Choir**. Bruns. Mono AXTL1087 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.). **"Russian Songs".** Vols. 1, 2 and 3. **Don Cossack Choir**. Philips Mono ABE10229-31 (7 in., 11s. plus 3s. 7d. P.T. each). **"Silver Chords".** Rae Jenkins and his String Chorale with David, the Silver Stars and the Two Choristers. Fontana. ★Stereo STFL504 (12 in., 27s. plus 8s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: TFL503 (11/59).

Here we have choral singing of several kinds, most kinds in fact except that traditional to our own country and based on the music of the English church. That I do not relish all of it is not, I hope, an indication that my tastes are becoming insular. The great Mormon Tabernacle Choir is a finely disciplined body with a good tone and it goes without saying that it is immaculately accompanied by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy and yet I cannot respond to their versions of some of the Bach, or of *The Heavens are telling*, or to the heavy-handed treatment of Schubert's *To Music*, as I said last January when reviewing these titles in EP form. The Rimsky-Korsakov I find more acceptable as I do also such things as Gounod's *Holy, Holy, Holy*, Holst's setting of the 148th Psalm and the excerpt from *Finlandia* which adapts very well to choral dress. Others however may not feel as I do.

The Roger Wagner Chorale aim in their record at the expression of sentiment to the

pluperfect degree and hit the bull's eye right in the middle, and without descending to sentimentality. A little of this goes a long way and beautifully as they sing, two or three of the items at a sitting are enough. So used this record will give pleasure for many years. In the stereo version there is a particularly pleasant spaciousness.

It will be noted that the Don Cossack Choir appears on two different labels. Here we are in a different world, an exciting world, but a world in which one tends to be distracted from the musical content by the virtuosity of its presentation. This may not be a correct attitude but it is one to which most of us surrender ourselves sometimes. "Russian Fair" contains ten tracks which between them cover pretty well every mood. The first, from which the record takes its title, is a re-creation, mostly through folk songs, of the atmosphere of a boisterous fair. Peasants, soldiers, cossacks and beggars are all there and can be recognised as can the wheezing of old "bagpipe organ". The other tracks also contain folk or folk-like music including a cadet's song, love songs, a New Year legend and carols.

The three EPs also contain ten tracks between them. They too offer us all moods and emotions and again one finds it difficult to consider the songs from the purely musical standpoint. Virtuosity plus unusual and dramatic effects superimpose themselves and in cold blood afterwards one feels that one has enjoyed hugely some items that would be very dull sung by any other choir. Best of all I like *The Song of Prince Oleg* and the fine *Cherubim Hymn* in Vol. 2 and *Snow-covered Russia* and the *Song of the River Kama* in Vol. 3. I liked least the Tchaikovsky selection in Vol. 1. It seems incredible that Serge Jaroff who directed the choir at its first concert in 1923 should still be conducting with as much fire and energy as ever. Since 1939 the members of the choir, who inevitably change gradually, have been American citizens.

"Silver Chords" is only partly choral but this is a convenient place in which to consider it. It is the stereo version of the mono LP which I reviewed in November last and which is addressed in particular to those who have an affection for the radio programme of the same name. The stereo sound is a little richer and more spacious but has brought with it some pre-echo which I did not note in the mono version.

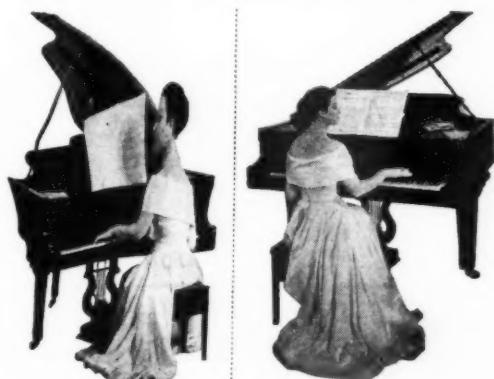
SUPPÉ. Overtures. Light Cavalry: Poet and Peasant: Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna: Pique Dame. **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra cond. Solti**. Decca Mono LXT5648: ★Stereo SXL2174 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.).

The playing time of this record of Suppé overtures is slightly under 30 minutes for the two sides. This might be understandable if performance and/or recording were outstanding, but they are not. In performance Solti sacrifices nearly everything to brilliance and the recorded sound in mono is no more than average whilst I know of several stereo discs that are, in my opinion, more realistic. My first choice for a group of Suppé overtures whether in mono or stereo is still the Columbia Krips/Philharmonia Promenade record which contains the same four overtures and the lesser-known *Tantalusqualen* and *Die Irrfahrt ins Glück* as well (Mono: 33SX1053; Stereo: SCX3256).

* * * * *

The Mikado was the first of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas to appear on LP, in July 1950, and the same recording is now the first issue of the series to be released on the Ace of Clubs label (ACL1014-5). From memory I am pretty sure that although the same tapes are used they have been redubbed and the resulting sound is smoother than it was originally. The performance is lusty and lively rather than distinguished

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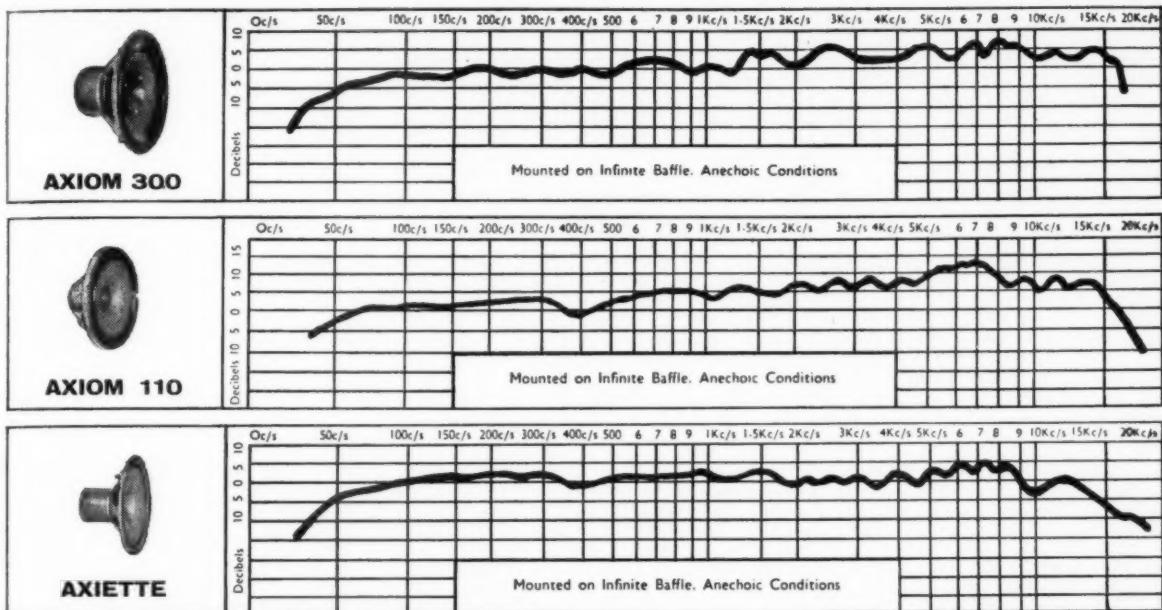
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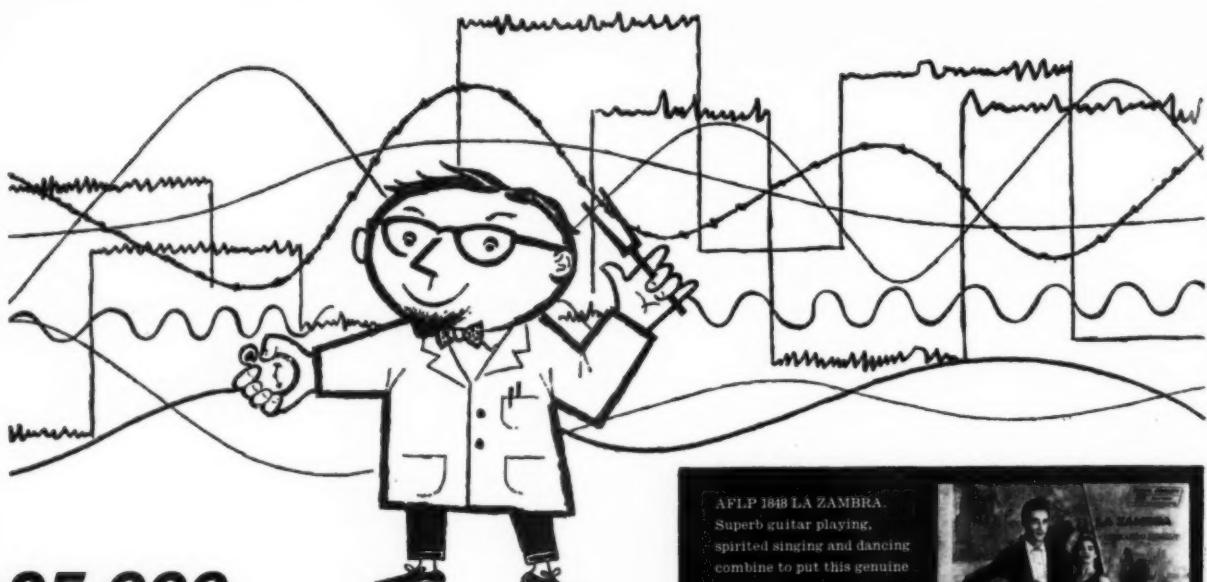
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by finesse so far as the concerted numbers and orchestra are concerned, but it has the invaluable advantage that in it we hear not only **Martyn Green**, who suffered so grievous an accident in America last year, but also **Darrell Fancourt**, **Richard Watson**, **Leonard Osborn** and **Ellie Halman**, none of whom is now with the D'Oyly Carte Company.

"An Evening at the Opera" (Felsted Stereo SPD3004, Mono PDL85072) is like most other orchestral operatic selections except that the items are separately banded instead of being amalgamated into a pot-pourri. Operas represented are *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *La Gioconda*, *La Bohème*, *La Traviata*, *Werther*, *Caillotteria Rusticana*, *Faust* (Gounod's) and *Pagliacci*, all by highlights, of course. The playing of **Wal-Berg and his Orchestra** is sound if not subtle, and the recording is a little brash but well forward. There is little to choose between the two versions.

Raoul Poliakin secures more finesse from the **Stadium Symphony Orchestra** of New York in "The Glory of the Waltz" which comprises Weber's *Invitation to the Dance* (in the Berlioz arrangement), Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier Waltzes*, Tchaikovsky's waltzes from *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Casse Noisette* and Johann Strauss's *Wiener Blut* and *Künstlerleben* (Top Rank Mono 35/022). This is an attractive record for all to whom the selection of titles does not offer duplicates of what they already have. Mr. Poliakin was born in Cairo and went to the U.S.A. in 1941, having already toured the world as a solo violinist. He has played with several of the great American orchestras. He studied conducting under Pierre Monteux and was assistant to Kostelanetz for five years, of which period traces may be heard here.

Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* lends itself very well to the making of a "Symphonic Picture" from its music, wherein it differs from many operas, and in constructing one Robert Russell Bennett has done a very fine job, not only in orchestrating the tunes, of which so many are really good as well as immediately attractive, but also in welding them together. Moreover, *Porgy and Bess* is a minor masterpiece. Bennett's score is admirably played by the **Symphony of the Air Pops Orchestra** under D'Arteaga and with **Roger Scime** as pianist and is well recorded on Fontana Mono TFL5076. Most commendably the label announces that the *Piano Concerto* in F on the reverse is abbreviated. I personally see no harm in the cuts which have been discreetly made, but perhaps purists may, so I had better confine my recommendation to the ordinary listener who will, I think, hear as I do.

The album of twelve Neapolitan and similar songs issued simultaneously in stereo on RCA SB2062, and mono on RB16178, make a very suitable memorial to **Mario Lanza**. They reveal him at his best, for he was always far more effective in such songs, even though they were usually sung with more vigour than finesse, than in opera. Here the very vigour coupled with the sheer physical quality of voice can be enjoyed by all. The sound in stereo is distinctly the more spacious and the balance is more natural.

"None but the weary heart" played by the **Michael Collins Strings** on Col. SCX3276 is the stereo version of the mono release which I reviewed unenthusiastically in July last.

My last LPs are stereos of "Balley Highlights from Opera" played by the **Concert Arts Symphony Orchestra** under Erich Leinsdorf (Capitol SP8488) which sounds more exciting than its mono counterpart of last November, and "Tempo Español" played by the **Capitol Symphony Orchestra** under Carmen Dragon (Capitol SP8487) in which the items by Massenet, Falla and Bizet still sound better than the more popular tunes rigged up in over-elaborate arrangements by the conductor.

Coming now to EPs I start with a name long familiar, but which I have not heard of for many years. A record by **Marek Weber and his Orchestra** was reviewed in the very first volume of THE GRAMOPHONE, in March 1924 to be precise. It was a Parlophone record and reference was made in the review to earlier Odeon records. The anonymous reviewer praised his conducting and said that "the light and shade that he gets into this restaurant music is astonishing". He might well have added that his playing was extremely good too, for like Johann Strauss, Marek Weber led, and I believe still leads his orchestra (now American) playing the fiddle and conducting with his bow when necessary. He sounds as good as ever but the four Strauss waltzes included in "Waltz Time"—*Vienna Blood*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, *Emperor* and *Roses from the South*—are sadly truncated to get them on to an EP (Fontana Mono TFE17130).

Johann Strauss is also played by the **Boston Pops Orchestra** under **Arthur Fiedler**, and very well played too. This orchestra is always better in the polkas than the waltzes. In addition to *Thunder and Lightning* from which the disc takes its title there is the *Pizzicato Polka*, Edward Strauss's lively *Bahn frei* and Dinicu's exciting *Hora Staccato* (R.C.A. Mono RCX172).

Stereo orchestral selections from musicals are offered by the **Michael Collins Orchestra** on Col. ESG7761 and the **Mantovani Orchestra** on Decca ST0125. The former devotes one side each to *The Arcadians* and *The Quaker Girl*, and the latter includes excerpts from *The New Moon*, *The Desert Song*, *Maytime* and *The Student Prince* in "The Best of Sigmund Romberg". For such music I much prefer the less idiosyncratic style of Michael Collins. The recording is excellent in both cases.

That brass and military bands in stereo sound superbly natural, particularly when played on big equipment which will handle a large volume of sound comfortably, is exemplified by both the Columbia and Decca companies. Four items played by the **Munn and Felton's Band** under **Harry Mortimer** and **S. H. Boddington** respectively are taken from the Columbia mono LP 33SX1118 which I reviewed in April 1959 and now issued in both stereo (ESG7785) and mono (SEG7973). This is their first appearance in stereo and very impressive it is.

Even more impressive are the stereo versions of two EPs by the **Massed Bands of Fodens**, **Fairey Aviation** and **Morris Motors**, also conducted by **Harry Mortimer**, as they should be by reason of the greater numbers and weight. As I have noted before, however, the stereo improvement is even greater in the quieter passages than when the whole band is pulling its full weight. This is magnificent playing too. The titles are Percy Grainger's *Shepherd's Hey*, the Johann Strauss *Perpetuum mobile*, an arrangement of *John Peel* by Fred Mortimer (Harry's father) and the well-known *Trumpet Voluntary* of Jeremiah Clarke (Stereo ST0127, Mono DFE 6614) and a cut arrangement of Alfvén's *Swedish Rhapsody* with three tuneful trifles, *Alpine Rumba*, *Elizabethan Serenade* and *Tyrolean Tango* (Stereo ST0128, Mono DFE6615). That I have stressed the quality of the stereo versions of these records must not be taken to mean that the monos are not good—they are very good indeed.

Col. ESG7770 gives on EP four of the items from 33SX1153 by the **Welsh Guards' Band** under **Major F. L. Statham** but in stereo, and very good stereo too. It is also announced in mono on SEG7916, but I have not heard this. Similarly four of Kenneth J. Alford's marches played by the **Royal Artillery Band** under **Major S. V. Hays** are available on Philips Mono BBE12297; and Col. Mono SED5561 by the **Massed Pipers of the Scots Guards** contains a selection of marches, strathspeys and

reels taken from 33SX1042. All are successful. The children upon whom I have tried them react very favourably to my last two EPs, both of which are mono. They are "Mighty Mouse", two adventures of **Mighty Mouse** and his pals, on M.G.M. EP709, and five "English Folk Dances for Young People" played by the **Country Dance Band** led by **Nan Fleming-Williams**. These are probably designed primarily for school use but are just as welcome in a home which has youngsters.

Finally I come to groups of "singles" in the E.M.I. "Your Kind of Music" and Philips "Musical Gems" series, both of which I am told are becoming increasingly popular. Many are reissues of older recordings, and wherever possible I give the date of the original review after the number. In all cases where I have been able to compare the new with the original issue I find the new dubbing as good as, if not better than the first release.

From H.M.V. there are: The Overtures to *Bitter Sweet and Desert Song* played by the **Michael Collins Orchestra** (TP244) and Saint-Saëns's *Danse Macabre* played by the **A.B.C. Sydney Symphony Orchestra** under **Sir Eugene Goossens** (TP236, 5/54). Columbia's contributions are: Suppé's *Light Cavalry Overture* played by the **Philharmonia Orchestra** under **George Weldon** (SCD2108, 5/53); *The Tey Symphony*, usually attributed to Haydn but now recognised to be by Léopold Mozart, played by the same orchestra and conductor (SCD2098, 10/51); **Constant Lambert's** wonderful performance with the **Philharmonia Orchestra** of Waldteufel's *Skaters Walz* (SCD2097, 7/49); the world-famous record of Purcell's *Nymphs and Shepherds* and the *Dance Duet* from *Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel* sung by 250 **Manchester Schoolchildren** conducted by **Sir Hamilton Harty** (SCD2092, 1/30); Sibelius's *Finlandia* played by the **Philharmonia Orchestra** under **Karajan** (SCD2115, 12/53); Hubert Bath's *Cornish Rhapsody* played by **Harriet Cohen** with the **London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by the composer (SCD2089, 12/44).

The new Philips "Musical Gems", fewer of which have been previously released in England in another form, are: Johann Strauss's *Blus Damabe* and *Voices of Spring* waltzes in performances by the **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** under **Moralt** (SBF222 and 223, 8/54); Josef Strauss's *Music of the Spheres* played by the same orchestra under **Edward Strauss**—is he a descendant of the Waltz Kings I wonder?—(SBF187); the "Notturno" from Grieg's *Lyric*

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Suite coupled with a quite charming little composition called *The Herdgirl's Sunday* and which is, I gather, an arrangement by Svendsen from Ole Bull played by the Vienna Orchestra under **Fjelstad** (SBF215); Sinding's *Rush of Spring*, Grieg's *To the Spring*, Op. 43, No. 2, and Liszt's *Walderauschen* very well played by **Cor de Groot** (SBF210); Kreisler's *Caprice Viennois* and *Tambourin Chinois* played with less charm and affection than Kreisler himself used to lavish on them by **Thomas Magyar** (SBF217); Tchaikovsky's Polonaise from *Eugene Onegin*, and Chopin's *Military Polonaise* played with plenty of vigour by the Vienna Orchestra

under **Loibner** (SBF216); Saint-Saëns's *The Swan* coupled with Drigo's *Serenade* inimitable, but to my ears, not very satisfactory performances by the **Kostelanetz Orchestra** (SBF230); Bach's *Jesu, Joy of man's desiring* and *Sheep may safely graze*, played by **E. Power Briggs** on the organ with the **Columbia Chamber Orchestra** directed by **Richard Burgin**, a combination that will please many but by no means all (SBF226); and lastly **Pinza** singing two trifles, *Do you remember* and *Into the night* which makes me long for other, better and more interesting records by this great bass to be reissued (SBF229).

MISCELLANEOUS AND DANCE

POP SINGLES

First it was Winifred Atwell; then Russ Conway cracked the pop music world open with more jangle-box piano. Then came Tony Hatch, Joe Henderson, and, from America, "Fingers" Carr. Latest traveller on the bandwagon is **Ken Morris**, with two bright numbers on H.M.V. POP699, *Blondie* and *Shanks's Pony*. **Joe Henderson**, on the other hand, has two quite normal-sounding piano numbers, supported by singing strings and singing girls on Pye N15243. These are *Winterst* and *Golden Gurus*.

One can have too much of even the best, but I can take this sort of music much more easily than the snorting, rasping saxophone tones on Fontana H236, from **Bob Miller's Millermen** generating a powerful beat and little else. Another large unit applying a similar idea to a very romantic theme (that of the film "A Summer Place") is **Hugo Winterhalter** on R.C.A. 1164, backed by *Blue Strings*, an extension, if you like, of *The Marching Strings*.

Vocal singles of merit include **Hugo and Luigi's** Chorus and Orchestra in a simple, catchy tune not unlike *Red River Valley* with a dash of *Lili Marlene* and *You Belong To Me* thrown in, called *Just Come Home*; the other side recalls *The Cry Of The Wild Geese* from its lyrics, *Lonesome Stranger* (R.C.A. 1169). Both are sung with feeling and good taste by a big-voiced choir.

When I received **Emile Ford's** first Pye record (*What Do Want To Make Those Eyes At Me For?*) I didn't mention it in that month's notes, as it didn't seem to me to have anything beyond being a rock version of a veteran of the first world war; now I see Mr. Ford has recorded two numbers from a little nearer the present time, *On A Slow Boat To China* and *That Lucky Old Sun*, both of which date from 1949 if I remember correctly. I still wonder what he has that lots of others haven't; or is it just that these oldsters are always fresh and acceptable even to those not old enough to remember their original appearance? The number is Pye N15245.

About the time that these two songs first came out, Peter Lind Hayes started us chuckling at a droll monologue by Carson Robison, who ironically enough, died not long after composing it—*Life Gets Tee-jus, Don't It?* Now we have a new recording of it by **Wink Martindale** on London HLD9042. It bears comparison with the Hayes and Robison records and no more; the reverse is a British song that was revived about 1950, originally published in 1926, *I Never See Maggie Alone*. Good chorus stuff of a very elementary nature.

The first three of a series of twelve speech records of a very different kind have just appeared. These are Pye Zodiac records, and I suppose they should be regarded as EPs, since one side of each lasts for eight minutes or so, and the other has two musical items—light popular classics—on it. The speech side is by disc-jockey journalist **Neal Arden**, giving astrological character-readings written by the famous astrologer **Maurice Woodruff**. So far, we have had Aquarius, Pisces and Aries, so if you were born between January 20th and April 20th, you can now find out what jewellery you should wear, what job you will be most suited for, the dates between which your better half should be born to get the best results from marriage, and what you are like inside, as it were. The rest of the Zodiac signs will be issued in due course. The sleeves claim this has not been done before on records; actually, R. H. Naylor gave similar readings around 1933 on both H.M.V. and those eight-inch records from Woolworths, *Eclipse*. I know; I had some as a child! (Pye Zodiac Series ZOD1, 2 and 3 respectively).

Something that is neither sung nor exactly spoken is offered on Parlophone R4605 by **Peter Sellers**. *My Old Dutch* is not really very funny, but Lonnie Donegan fans will not agree with me when I say that *Puttin' On The Smile* is a beautiful caricature of Britain's first and last skiffler.

Two men and five girls complete the singles. **Pat Boone** goes in for some sloppy Mid-Victorian religious stuff in *Beyond The Sunset*, complete with spoken interpolation in true tear-jerker fashion, backed, I'm glad to say, with *The Faithful Heart*, from the film "Journey To The Centre Of The Earth", a very much more suitable number, and **Perry Como**, coincidentally, also sings sacred songs, both of them genuine, on R.C.A. 1163, being Alfred Hay Malotte's setting of *The Lord's Prayer*, and Schubert's *Ave Maria*. If you can swallow a crooner singing these, you will find nothing distasteful about them as songs, though the accompaniments are on the treacly side.

None of the five girls attempt anything other than unadorned seduction, if you see what I mean. **Debbie Reynolds** (London HLD9028) has developed a Gigli-esque sob which rather spoils two otherwise very sweet little songs; newcomer **Janet Richardson**, nineteen, of Glasgow, has as good a version of a much-recorded rocker as any in *You Got What It Takes* on Top Rank JAR288, backed by a deep-voiced rendering of a song of eternal fidelity, *No One Minute More*; **Kathy Linden** is sweetly seductive in *Think Love* and tells the happy tale of *Mary Lou Wilson and Johnny Brown* (Felsted AF130); **Petula Clark** (Pye

N15244) bounces in French in *Guitare et Tambourin*, and best of all, **Diana Dors**, a little surprisingly, has a better voice than many girls who have no other qualifications, as Pye N15242—*April Heart* and *Point Of No Return*—shows.

EPs and LPs

A month or two ago I commented on the near-naked dancing girl on the cover of an Audio-Fidelity LP; Parlo. PMC1109 features a similar design, the record—as if you cared—being *Music For An Arabian Night*, Oriental melodies in more or less Western style by **Ron Goodwin** and his Orchestra. It's certainly something out of the ordinary.

Personally, I find the cheerful grin of the casually, if fully, dressed lass on the cover of Col. 33SX1193 much more appealing, and if I bought records for their covers, as many do, I would buy this. Not only that, I would buy it for the record it contains. You should do the same, for **Frank Barber** conducting his Orchestra with the **Michael Sammes Singers** giving another demonstration of their superiority as a vocal group is good value for money. Crisp, modern but not screwy arrangements of songs about London should be sufficient reason for buying the record.

Here are some more records that offer value for money. First, two of Decca's bargain series on the Ace of Clubs label. ACL1011 has a set of *Great Movie Hits*, post-war vintage, played by an immaculate orchestra conducted by **Cyril Stapleton**. Although we've had lots of this sort of thing before, we've never had it so good as such a low price. And another thing—ACL1017 has **Frank Chacksfield**, always to be relied on for a well-chosen arrangement in perfect taste, conducting the principal numbers from the scores of Gershwin's *Porgy And Bess* and Kern's *Show Boat*. Beat that if you can!

The emphasis is on strings, actually or allegedly, in several new records I've just heard. I knew what to expect from **Pierre Challet** on Mercury ZEP10048 when I saw it included *Star Dust* and *Holiday For Strings*, even though I do not recall the name. Sweeping strings and piano—the mixture as usual in such cases. **Ray Ellis** conducts a set on M.G.M. C799 called *I'm In The Mood For Strings*; woodwind and brasses are heard too, so are a bunch of girls filling in wordlessly like sirens on the loose. I found more entertainment in **Percy Faith's** *Strings* (these really are all strings) in *Bouquet* on Philips BBL7336. These strings have a fine noble sound.

Norrie Paramor's strings are supported by a Latin beat and an anonymous soprano soloist of great charm in four Latin songs on Col. SEG7962, the strings being suitably luscious; and the tune *Limehouse Blues*, one of the most-recorded numbers of all time, surely, is heard on both *Vogue* VA160151 (**Mark Hunter's** *Hi-Fi Road To Romance* with the **London Arts Symphony Orchestra**, featuring a girl dressed not unlike Eliza Doolittle on the cover) and on M.G.M. C800, by **Billy Mure's** *Supersonic Guitars*. This strange group consists of five electric guitars and three drummers, and though it is easier on the ear than I had at first imagined, there's more than enough of the odd sound here. The rhythm section, if you can call it that, is very busy indeed.

If neither Irving Berlin nor Cole Porter ever write another word or note of a song, their past output is sufficient to guarantee LP and EP sets for years, without undue repetition. Unfortunately, whenever a company sets out to record yet another tribute to either composer, its representative A. and R. man never

seems anxious to stray far from a waltz or two, one of the *Lovely Day* songs (there are at least three), *Cheek To Cheek* and the *Annie Get Your Gun* score in the case of Berlin, and from the scores of *Roberta*, *Jubiles* and *Wake Up And Dream* in the case of Cole Porter. Something like this has happened with the **Frank de Vol** set of Berlin songs on Philips BBE12331, which has a bigger sound than the rather thin piano and (mostly) strings of **Stanley Black** and his Orchestra in a 12-inch *Berlin Showcase* (Ace of Clubs ACL1016), and with **Poliakin** conducting his Orchestra and Chorale on Top Rank 35-042 in a set of Porter numbers one side, Gershwin (equally threadbare) the other. The Chorale is not too clear in its diction, either. As Berlin, for example, has written over a thousand songs in the last fifty years, it would be nice to hear the other nine hundred sometimes.

I don't want anyone to feel that these stringy records are at all distasteful; but there seems to be such a huge mass of them that even the big beat and blatant brass of **Ralph Marterie** (Mercury ZEP10040) and the jangle-piano and eighteen-strong male chorus of **Knuckles O'Toole** in songs from the 'teens and 'twenties, supported by a rather noisy drummer, on Top Rank 35-042 supplied a contrast, even relief.

The vocalists range from the crystal-like tenor of **Harry Secombe** (Philips BBE12340) to the dark-brown bass of **Tex Ritter** (Cap. EAPI-1323). If ever they make a good picture of the life of Enrico Caruso, we have a naturally-gifted singer for the title-role here in Harry Secombe. Tex Ritter, of course, could never aspire to sing Mephistopheles, though some of his utterances are quite devilish (*Conversation With A Guy* makes an odd contrast with yet another reading of *Deck Of Cards*.)

Harry Secombe never gives the slightest hint in any of his four numbers that he is also a great comedian. For our comic relief, we must turn to the somewhat regional humour—of North Carolina—of **Andy Griffiths** (Cap. EAP-1256), on which he discusses that state at some length, and also tells the story of *Hamlet*, which is nowhere near as funny as Bernard Miles' version of the same story. Older readers may like to be reminded of **George Formby** and four of his songs that, recorded during and just before the last war, always seem to be the audible equivalent of those saucy seaside postcards. The number is Col. SEG7964.

I suppose we can regard **Robert Horton** (Pye NEP24118) in his recent appearance on *Sunday Night At The Palladium* as a light comedian as well as a tough-Western actor; he can also sing, in a surprisingly soft voice.

Three coloured artists with silky voices bring in their habitually large helpings of song. **Nat "King" Cole** (Cap. EAPI-1317) has four pleasant but unexceptional numbers; **Johnny Mathis** (Fontana TFL5061) sings a set called *Ride On A Rainbow* (titled for no other reason that I can see that this is one of the numbers on the disc) which also includes *A Lovely Way To Spend An Evening*, which number is among those sung more convincingly by **Brook Benton** in a set called *Endlessly* (Mercury MMC14022).

Mel Tormé (H.M.V. 7EG8773, *Isn't It Romantic?* and CLP1315, *Olé Tormé*, a fine set of Latin songs) is more to my liking, and his accompanists are more interesting, especially the solo guitar in the first-named song. **Johnny Ray** *On The Trail* (Philips BBL7363) is not as tearful as he was at the outset of his career, or as wild; he is not a very convincing cowboy, though, either.

Connie Conway (London HAW2214) is a man, believe it or not, who sings rather lugubriously in slow numbers and fairly

charges along in fast ones (such as *Beyond The Blue Horizon*, ending with the words "Beyond the blue horizon lies a setting sun", whereas the correct lyric is "... risin' sun", as it makes better sense and rhymes; this one has a very busy accompaniment, but all the background music on this disc is on the pretentious side). There is something of Mel Tormé in the quieter moods of **Monty Babson** (London HAJ2212), who uses a big accompaniment directed by Reg. Owen (yes, it was recorded in London); and we find a swinging orchestra behind **Perry Como** on his EP of up-tempo numbers such as the 1949 hit *Dear Hearts And Gentle People* (R.C.A. RCX170); these eleven-year-olds seem to be burgeoning afresh, as they say.

But the best of the male vocalists are collectively the **Kingston Trio**, who include their famous and delightful *San Miguel* along with a topical absurdity *Oleanna* and other cheerful nonsense on Cap. EAPI-1322; the two EPs of *Me And The Moon* on Bruns. OE9472/3 by **Bing Crosby** suffer from the gritty original recording, though he's still ahead of them all apart from this purely technical shortcoming.

THE MONTH'S CHOICE

Diana Dors	Pye N15242
Frank Barber	Col. 33SX1193
Cyril Stapleton	Acc of Clubs ACL1011
Frank Chacksfield	Acc of Clubs ACL1017
Percy Faith	Philips BBL7336
Doris Day	Philips BBE12339
Kingston Trio	Cap. EAPI-1322
Ray Charles Singers	Bruns. LAT8318

Of the girls, I'll settle for the pertness of **Doris Day** in four of her numbers from her latest film, "Pillow Talk" (Philips BBE12339), and the professional mellow assurance of **Dinah Shore** on Cap. T1247, rather than the assumed Americanism of **Ruby Murray**, who sounds more transatlantic than many singers born that side, on Col. 33SX1201; she might be Ruth Etting in *Button Up Your Overcoat*. **Shani Wallis** is too mannered for my liking on Philips BBE12337; **Parti Page** has a fourth EP in the series of *Pages* (Mercury ZEP10045) and an LP called *Indiscretion* (Mercury MMC14017), though it's not as enticing as it was doubtless meant to be; **Connie Francis**, who really is a girl, in case you didn't know, is not quite as pinched, vocally, on *You're My Everything*, which seems to turn up on every other EP and LP these days, and is the title of M.G.M. EP711; and **Marguerite Piazza** (Coral LVA9119) exhibits a good soprano voice in *Memorable Moments Of Music*, which is quite the most amazing hotch-potch of numbers I have ever met on an LP. I wonder whose bright idea it was to get a soprano to sing Canio's famous aria *Vestia la giubba* (*On With The Motley* to you) from *Pagliacci*, and then to follow it with—you'll never believe this, but it's true—*When The Saints Go Marching In*.

Well, I suppose there is a precedent for it in **Gracie Fields**, who could sandwich Bach's *Ave Maria* between a shredded version of Toselli's famous serenade and some ribaldry about biggest aspidistras. We've had little of Gracie lately; now there is an LP on Col. 33SX1198 of some of her best numbers, though from the vocal viewpoint, I feel the originals were best, even if they do show signs of groove-

wear. The **Ray Charles Singers** always delight me; so I will conclude this review this month with a word or two of praise for their splendid singing on Bruns. LAT8318 of *Juanita* and others under the title *In The Evening By The*

Moonlight. The guitar and/or banjo or harmonica accompaniments, without huge stringed or brass groups, make a superbly refreshing change. Full marks all round!

JOHN OAKLAND

STEREO/MONO POPS

These records are reviewed in their stereo form. The equivalent mono numbers, where available, are given for convenience.

Jimmy Durante, so I am told, once found himself sharing a lift at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel with Toscanini. A smile immediately stretched beneath the famous nose, and the comedian thrust his hand at the conductor. "Hoddy do maestro", he barked, "I'm in show bizness too". I recount the anecdote as an example of Durante's insouciance, his imperturbability. Even more convincing evidence of his sense of poise can be found on Brunswick STA3021 (mono LAT8312), "In Person—At The Piano", where the person and pianist are, of course, Durante himself. Not everybody knows that just after World War I Durante worked as a jazz pianist (well, a ragtime pianist really), actually leading a band that included the New Orleans clarinetist, Achille Bacquet. And when you listen to his playing on this record, particularly in such tracks as *I Want A Girl* and *Inka Dinka Doe*, there is a noticeable delicacy about it, a formality that belongs to the genuine ragtime performer. Not that this LP contains anything that can be called jazz; it's largely a collection of pop-songs of the 1920s—tunes like *Shine On Harvest Moon*, *Ida, Sweet As Apple Cider* and *Carolina In The Morning*—played attractively and spiced with an occasional vocal chorus and a gritty aside or two. A washboard even makes its appearance on a couple of tracks. As you'll gather, I enjoyed this record, although the stereo seemed a bit queer in one or two places; sometimes I could have sworn that two pianos were being played. Another performer who started out as a jazz pianist—in his case an exceptionally fine one—is **Nat "King" Cole**, a man who now spends all his time singing. Oddly enough, though, there are far fewer traces of jazz in "The Very Thought Of You", Capitol SLCT6173 (mono LCT6173) and "To Whom It May Concern", Capitol SLCT6182 (mono LCT6182), two new stereo releases by Nat Cole, than on Jimmy Durante's record. Personally, I always find Nat Cole's singing too anonymous, too transparent, but people who like to hear him getting to grips with a sentimental ballad should enjoy SLCT6173. It includes versions of *Cherchez La Femme*, *Magnificent Obsession*, *For All We Know* and *Impossible*, with accompaniments arranged and conducted by Gordon Jenkins. On the other LP Nat is backed up by Nelson Riddle's orchestra and arrangements, and this time the repertoire consists entirely of new tunes. These vary considerably in quality. One or two are positively pathetic—*In The Heart Of Jane Doe*, for instance, or *Love-Wise*, or *Lovesville* ("If you've never been in Lovesville, in the state of Ecstasy", begins the first stanza).

Pat Boone is another performer who always strikes me as being too negative, too watered-down, in his approach to singing. On "Side By Side", London SAH-D6057 (mono HA2210), he is partnered by his wife, Shirley, in a set of familiar songs, including *Now Is The Hour*, *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*, *Drifting And Dreaming* and *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*. The result is harmless but uninspiring. Much more gusto is to be found on "Mike!" Columbia EP ESG7784 (mono SEG7972), four tracks by the lively but relaxed **Michael Holliday**, one of the pleasantest British pop-singers to turn up for some time. The style, of course, is **Bing**

Crosby's, right down to the spots of whistling and the encouragement offered the musicians, but it's always engagingly done and—a saving grace, this—just like Mr. Crosby, Michael Holliday doesn't take his material too seriously. *The Folks Who Live On The Hill* (always a good song) and *Strange Music* (the result, according to the label, of collaboration between Grieg, Wright and Forrest) are treated romantically; *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* and *Love Is Just Around The Corner* move more casually, with a semi-Dixieland backing. The fifth singer in my column this month is the multi-lingual Miss Kitt, making her first appearance on the London label—SAH-R6058 (mono HA-R2207)—with "The Fabulous Eartha Kitt". This includes the usual group of foreign-language songs, ranging from *Sholem (Israeli)* to *Jambo Hippopotami* (probably Ashanti or Yoruba or something equally recondite). The English section contains a kittenish version of *Mack The Knife*, a would-be torrid number (*I'd Rather Be Burned As A Witch*), and a half-hearted bash at a genuine blues—Leroy Carr's beautiful *In The Evening When The Sun Goes Down*. With her tiny voice and wide vibrato, Miss Kitt might be called the Nellie Wallace of Harlem. Last of the vocal records to be reviewed this month is "Love Lost", Capitol ST1189 (mono T1189), a collection of love songs by **The Four Freshmen**. I wasn't very happy about the slightly mawkish approach to *I'm A Fool For You*, nor was I quite sure if the codding in *The Gal That Got Away* (a masculine variant upon the Harold Arlen song) was intentional or not. Nevertheless the LP is fairly typical of this quartet's musically approach, even if it is more subdued in manner and generally less enterprising than some of their other records.

The first moving-picture which the Lumière brothers showed in public was of a railway train arriving at a country station in France. The first stereo recording that I ever heard was of an express train thundering across the room. **George Melachrino** keeps up this fine tradition by prefacing "Rendezvous In Rome", R.C.A. SF-5049 (mono RD27150), with the sounds of a train arriving at its terminus, complete with the opening and shutting of carriage-doors. The first track, in fact, *Rome, The City*, goes in for naturalism enthusiastically, for it contains a sequence by solo violin and accordion which has the violinist moving about the room, just as he might do in a café. On the whole this is an attractive LP, with good playing by the Melachrino Strings and Orchestra, and some enterprising arrangements. Four of the pieces were composed by George Melachrino himself (*Rome The City, View Of The Vatican, Colosseum and Vista Roma*) and another one (*Autostraada*, all about traffic and motor-horns) by William Hill Bowen. The remainder consist of such items as *Volare*, *Three Coins In The Fountain* and the love duet from Act 3 of *Tosca*. George Melachrino and his Orchestra also appear on H.M.V. CSD1276 (mono CLP1197), "Moonlight Concerto", a very varied collection. **Arthur Sandford** plays the piano part in extracts from the Grieg, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov concertos, doing it very cleanly and competently. Richard Rodgers' *Slaughter On Tenth Avenue* has been scored to allow **Ronald Chesney**'s harmonica to become the chief protagonist, a rôle it performs with great success, sounding very much at home inside a piece of music that is—in the right kind of way—rather brassy and sentimental. **Gordon Lewis** is the soloist in Artie Shaw's *Concerto For Clarinet*, performing the solo part impeccably but with less jazz feeling than Shaw used to display, an effect that is probably emphasized by the slightly portentous background. *Concerto In Jazz* turns out to be a cousin of the *Rhapsody In Blue*,

very theatrical and not at all nourishing; **Pat Dodd** does the most he can with the piano part. Which only leaves *Copper Concerto*, a cleverly scored piece of nonsense based upon that familiar ballad, *If You Want To Know The Time Ask A Policeman*. The *Concerto In Jazz* and *Concerto For Clarinet*, incidentally, are available in stereo form on an H.M.V. EP, GES5782 (mono 7EG8536).

When I reviewed a **Paul Weston** LP of mood music in last month's issue of *THE GRAMOPHONE* I commented upon the necessity for this kind of music never to shock or surprise. Paul Weston seems to have brought the same attitude to "The Music of Jerome Kern", Philips SBBL531 (mono BBL7268), on which, once more, the emphasis is upon smooth, well integrated playing by strings and woodwind. But although the scores may not be adventurous, the tunes are mostly good ones, including *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes*, *A Fine Romance*, *The Song Is You and Long Ago And Far Away*. Equally subdued in manner and equally well performed are the four tracks (*It Must Be Magic*, *Anniversary Waltz*, *Bless This House* and *Eton Boating Song*) which make up "Words and Music", H.M.V. EP GES5761 (mono 7EG8441). **Jack Payne** and his orchestra supplying the music, the Rita Williams Singers the words. Not all LPs live up to their titles, but "Strings In Hi-Fi" Mercury CMS18009 (no mono issue) is certainly one that does. **Pierre Challet** and his 75-piece string ensemble fairly whizz through some of the intricate passages, the violins swirling, soaring and hovering. I tend to be antagonistic toward acrobatics of this kind, but even I was impressed. The trouble is that so much of the actual music itself is trivial, scarcely worthy of this technical wizardry. There are too many novelty numbers with titles like *Fiddle Faddle*, *Dance of the Spanish Onion* and *Comedians Gallop*. It is noticeable that the best tracks are those which present the Scherzo from Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony (plenty of showy pizzicato work here) and the Can-Can from *La Boutique Fantastique*. Incidentally, a solo violinist who has obviously lent an ear to Stephane Grappelli's playing makes his appearance near the end of *Sophisticated Lady*. Perhaps the most imaginative light music of the month, however, comes from **Frank Cordell**, who makes economical yet exciting use of his orchestra on H.M.V. EP GES5753 (mono 7EG8469), "The Melody Lingers On", four tracks taken off an LP, H.M.V. CSD1251 (mono CLP1153). The title song is given delicate treatment and has some excellent woodwind playing; a faintly boppish melody makes its appearance in the score of *The Continental*; while *Fascinating Rhythm* is a splendid example of Cordell's work, particularly the way the opening theme statement is thrown around from trombone to xylophone to harp, and so on. Some good solos can be heard; Ossian Ellis (harp) and Don Lusher (trombone) perform in *Fascinating Rhythm*, while Tommy Whittle (tenor sax) virtually makes *Just One Of Those Things* his own property. In every instance the stereo recording seems exemplary.

Those of us who have let the one-eyed monster creep into our homes (it flickers at me even as I write these words) will be familiar with such folk-heroes as Maverick, Cheyenne and the honest-faced Wagon master. They may, or may not, be pleased to know that the musical themes tagged on to these dramatic acquaintances, plus a whole heap more, can be found on "TV Western Theme Songs", Coral SVL3009 (mono LVA9117), performed by **Lawrence Wells** and his Champagne Music Makers. Except for *Tales of Wells Fargo*, every theme has a vocal chorus sung by The Sparklers, while in between or around are passages for strings, or else a solo concertina or

soprano saxophone. What irks me, however, is the incessant clippety-clopping that goes on all the time. Perhaps I just don't have horse sense. Another facet of American culture is represented by "Swingin', Marchin' and Whistlin'", Columbia SCX3283 (mono 33SX1182), on which **Buddy Williams** and his Golden Echo Music perform twelve American college songs. The stereo is used in a most dynamic fashion, but the performances have a bewildering variety about them, ranging from plain, ordinary whistling above a rhythmic section to the Basicish sequence in *The Eyes of Texas*. Mostly though, this is boisterous, rather brash music, with more verve than rhythmic subtlety, ending up with a rousing performance of *Washington and Lee Swing* (brass on the left, reeds on the right, and lots of to and fro). Every LP nowadays, of course, is built around a theme, however tenuous, and the theme underlying "Billy Vaughn's Golden Hits" London SAH-D6056 (mono HA2209) is simple enough. The record brings together tunes that have "filled a pot of gold for their authors", or, as the sleeve-note quaintly puts it later on, the "twelve first families of Hitsville". As with so many LPs now, it boils down to a question of re-creation, most of the performances being modelled upon the original recordings. In *Song Of India*, for instance, the trumpeter plays Bunny Berigan's 25-year-old solo while the trombonist blows sweet and smooth, just as Tommy Dorsey did. The Vaughn orchestra displays plenty of bounce and versatility, and it's a pity the technique and enthusiasm couldn't have been harnessed to more original ends. As it is there are ricky-tick versions of *12th Street Rag*, *Oh!* and *The Chipmunk Song*, a long and noisy drum solo on *Topsy II*, and a very lukewarm performance of *One O'Clock Jump*. The best track of all is undoubtedly the re-creation of Artie Shaw's *Summit Ridge Drive*, complete with sprightly harpsichord, growling trumpet and vivacious stereo presence.

"**Johnny Maddox** plays the Million-Sellers", London SAH-D6059 (mono HA2211) tries to do something very similar to the Billy Vaughn LP, the tunes including *Beer Barrel Polka*, *The Aba Daba Honeymoon*, *You Always Hurt The One You Love* and *Rock-A-Bye Your Baby*. Johnny Maddox is described in the sleeve-note as a ragtime pianist, yet all he has in common with the ragtime tradition is a certain cool formality, and perhaps an odd detail of phrasing now and again. Let's face it, this is pub-piano, very like the kind of thing which has made Russ Conway so popular. A much more accomplished pianist is **Roger Williams**, heard on London SAH-R6064 (mono HA2218) playing "More Songs of the Fabulous Fifties". Williams' normal approach is to dress-up a song like *All The Way or Moments To Remember*, playing what might be called "concerto-type piano" against a background of strings and woodwind. Occasionally he shows his genuine skill as a jazz pianist (he once took lessons from Lennie Tristano), as in the last half of *Memories Are Made Of This*. Next we plunge into the music intended for dancing rather than listening, starting off with four H.M.V. EPs by **Joe Loss** and his orchestra, all very competent and musically. GES5758, 5763 and 5774 (mono 7EG8478, 8473 and 8512 respectively) each contain two waltzes and two quicksteps, while GES5783 (mono 7EG8537) consists entirely of quicksteps (including *Tip Toe Through The Tulips* and *You Are My Lucky Star*). Also suitable for dancing is "Dancin' Banjos (No. 2)", Columbia ESG7781 (mono SEG7961), four medleys (of 12 tunes altogether) by the **Big Ben Banjo Band**, boisterous, unsophisticated performances of such items as *My Sweetie Went Away*, *Roll Out The Barrel* and *Painting The Clouds With Sunshine*. And hidden

David OISTRAKH

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away among these records aimed at the dancing public is a very prepossessing EP by **Tony Crombie** and his Men, "Swingin' Dance Beat" on Columbia ESG7768 (mono SEG7882). Crombie, of course, is one of Britain's finest jazz drummers and his group includes several well-known jazz musicians. The stereo recording is particularly effective in the crisp versions of *Anything Goes* and the *Carioca*, as well as in Crombie's own tune, *Sadie's Song*.

Two new London LPs by **Martin Denny**— "Quiet Village", SAH-U6055 (mono HA2208) and "Exotica", SAH-W6062 (mono HBU1079)—could just as easily have been titled "The Modern Jazz Quartet Goes Polynesian" or "Ronnie Ronalde Whistles Shina No Yuru". When I reviewed an earlier Martin Denny LP last January I commented upon the way in which animals and birds kept crawling and scuttling between the speakers. The same thing happens again. In fact one waits so expectantly for the next sound effect to turn up—a hoopoe hooping or hyenas laughing—that the music begins to take a back-seat. As it is, the ensemble performs a very eclectic selection including (on SAH-U6055) *Hawaiian War Chant*, *Laura* and *My Little Grass Shack In Kealakekua Hawaii*, and (on SAH-W6062) *Return To Paradise*, *Hong Kong Blues* and *China Nights*. Both LPs can be recommended without reservation to anybody who wants to show off his stereo equipment. It's odd, incidentally, that both records include the same track (*Quiet Village*) and SAH-W6062 (a 12in. LP) boasts two more tracks (*Buy Port*, *Waipio*) than its 10in. mono counterpart. From the Pacific islands we go to South America—to "Honeymoon In South America", to be exact, Pye GSGL10035 (mono GGL0035), on which the **Rio Carnival Orchestra** perform such familiar items as *Brazil*, *La Paloma*, *Tango Del Amor* and *La Comparsita*; all very competent but rather conventional. Next comes the music of **Chaquito** (Rey del Cha-Cha-Cha), Fontana STFL505 (mono TFL5062), which although sounding more authentic than the previous LP is actually the work of a British arranger and home-grown musicians. It's a creditable and colourful set of performances, making good use of stereo, but in the end I find that I can't hear more than three cha-chas—anybody's cha-chas—without feeling drowsy. More Latin-American tunes can be found on a group of EPs by **Tony Osborne**, his Piano and Orchestra: "Cha Cha With Tony", H.M.V. GES5756 (mono 7EG8443), includes *Dolores* and *Indian Summer*; "The Latin Touch", H.M.V. GES5764 (mono 7EG8497), with *Poinciana* and *I've Never Been In Love Before*—and a non-Latin one this time—"Our Love Story" (*Laura, Stay As Sweet As You Are*, etc.), on H.M.V. GES5772 (mono 7EG8514). Last of all, let me recommend a pleasant little H.M.V. EP, GES5781 (mono 7EG8535), by the **Lecuona Cuban Boys**. This isn't really very authentic either, but it does present performances of four of Lecuona's most famous tunes—*Malaguena*, *Siboney*, *Jungle Dreams* and *Say Si Si*, attractively scored and with some enthusiastic drumming by Candido.

CHARLES FOX.

CONTINENTAL RECORDS

There was a time, though I can't claim first-hand knowledge of it, when the London music-hall was probably richer than any other city's in talent and personality: one has only to think of Lauder, Leno, Marie Lloyd, Vesta Tilley, Little Tich. But in my time the forcing-ground has been Paris. Where are our equivalents of Guilbert, Mistinguett, Chevalier, Josephine Baker, Trenet, Montand, Juliette Greco and Edith Piaf? Guilbert and "Miss", of course, have gone, and some of the others are past their best; but **Edith Piaf**, despite recent

illnesses, is still there, singing the sort of songs she has always sung, with incomparable verve and feeling.

Like so many members of her profession, she was raised in a hard school. She came from a very poor family, had little education and no formal musical training. Like the great Rachel, she gained her first experience performing in the streets, and in essence her style has never changed. A tiny figure with a personality big enough to dominate the largest audience, she still wears the plain black of her impoverished childhood, still makes the same simple, down-to-earth appeal to the man and woman in the street. Her songs are of lonely women lamenting faithless lovers: her backgrounds are ports and cafés and poor streets where love relieves the drabness for a moment and is gone.

Her latest record to be issued here, *Milord* (Col. 45-DC754), has the same ingredients and the same appeal. The singer speaks touchingly that she is nothing: *Je ne suis qu'une fille du port, une ombre de la rue*. One day she sees a magnificent traveller with a beautiful woman on his arm. He hasn't noticed her, and would ignore her if he did, but she pours out her appeal: "Come, milord, sit at my table. It's cold outside and comfortable in here: let me see you smile." And the time comes when her dream comes true. Her hero loses his sweetheart, the poor singer calls to him again, and when he turns and for the first time sees her, his eyes are full of tears. Treated by a lesser artist, the sentimentality would be unbearable. Mlle Piaf, with her powerful personality and broad technique, now tugging unashamedly at your heart-strings, now belting it over like a Sophie Tucker, makes it oddly moving. It's not just an accident, I think, that with its simple romanticism and strong beat, *Milord* was played by a couple of teenagers in my family more often last week-end than any other "pop" number.

Amalia Rodrigues is to Portugal what Piaf is to France. Unlike the Frenchwoman, she was reckoned a beauty, but otherwise they have much in common—early poverty, struggle and fame. She has long been Portugal's foremost singer of fados, a national institution, friend of the fashionable and the great. Now we have two collections—"Amalia Sings", Vols. 1 and 2 (Col. SEGC48 and 49)—in which she is heard at her best. Indeed, a Portuguese friend is of the opinion that she has never before been recorded quite so well. The first volume includes two orthodox fados, *Eugenio da Camara* and *Hilario*, which should appeal to anyone who likes the form at all. Even more to my taste are *Ha Festa na Mouraria*, set in Lisbon's old Moorish quarter, and *Malmequer Pequeno*, in which one learns that it's not only in this country that girls sentimentally pull petals from the daisy. In the second volume I particularly liked *Noite de Santo Antonio*, about one of Portugal's popular celebrations of saints' days, and the *Novo Fado da Severa*, inspired by a woman as dangerously attractive as Carmen, who is said to have been loved by noblemen but to have preferred bullfighters.

LILIAN DUFF.

FOLKSONG

It was in May 1959 that I last reviewed a batch of folk song recordings. One of the records I dealt with then was of Dominic Behan singing a group of Irish street ballads, all of them previously heard in a Third Programme broadcast, "Lots of Fun at Finnegan's Wake". At the time I bemoaned the fact that *Mrs. Hooligan's Xmas Cake*, one of the highlights of the broadcast, had been omitted. Now, however, I'm happy to announce that **Dominic Behan** performs this splendid comic song with great

verve on Collector JEI 4, together with four other songs encountered in "Finnegan's Wake": *Brian O'Linn*, *Botheration*, *Buacailin Down* and James Joyce's own ballad, *Perse O'Reilly* (to be found on pp. 44-47 of the English edition of "Finnegan's Wake"). All are sung in a masterful but ingratiating fashion. Admirers of Dominic Behan's singing could also do worse than listen to Decca 45F11147, containing *The Bells of Hell* and *The Captains and the Kings*, two songs from "The Hostage", the play by brother Brendan. These aren't exactly folk songs, and the accompaniments are decidedly gimmicky, but Behan sings with typical gusto and humanity.

"Sweet England", eighteen love songs and ballads "from Southern England" sung by **Shirley Collins** (Argo LP RG150), carries a sleeve-note in which Alan Lomax predicts that within ten years Miss Collins could be a major artist. He may be right, but at the moment I should like to hear more assurance and more variety in her singing. It is right and proper for a folk singer to sound anonymous, but that is hardly the same thing as lacking presence. Nevertheless, this is a useful collection of songs, including such delightful items as *The Cuckoo* and *The Bonny Labouring Boy*. It seems a little odd, though, to find an Irish, a New Zealand and three American songs in the line-up, even if one of the American items—*Omie Wise*, a mountain murder ballad—is given the dead-pan, faintly sardonic treatment it demands. Purists may also object to the accompanying banjos and guitars, which add an extra transatlantic flavour to the music. Similar criticisms can be levelled at "The Foggy Dew" (Collector JEB3), on which—in addition to the title-song—Miss Collins sings *Brigg Fair*, *The Berkshire Tragedy* and *Geordie*. Fuzzy recording doesn't help to improve matters.

On Collector JEB2 the **Steve Benbow Four** perform a group of lively songs (notably *Captain Kidd* and *The Coalowner and the Pitman's Wife*), but in a very stolid way. The best track has **Shirley Bland** singing *North Country Maid* (better known as *The Oak and the Ash*). Next come two EPs of songs from the Border, but performed in far too genteel a fashion. "Songs from Northumbria" (Beltona SEP66), including *Water of Tyne* and *Blow the Wind Southerly*, presents **Margaret Hewitt** (complete with Celtic harp) displaying a fine voice but very little feeling for folk music. **Owen Brannigan** is in a very similar position on H.M.V. 7EG8551, on which, accompanied at the piano by Gerald Moore, he sings a mixture of Northumbrian and Tyneside songs. The best performances are of the dialect songs: *Cushie Butterfield*, *Dance Ti' Thee Daddy* and *Keep Your Feet Still*, *Geordie*, *Hinney*!

The remaining records take us north of the Border. In fact the **Joe Gordon Four** might be described as a Scottish equivalent to Steve Benbow's Sassenach group. They are, however, much more professional. Using an electric guitar, string bass and a generally sophisticated approach, the Folk Four can scarcely qualify as an authentic folk group, but their music is a cut above the merely pleasant. H.M.V. 7EG8454 contains some very satisfying tracks, especially *Ridin' Doon the Glesca* and *Lassie wi' the Yellow Coatie*, as well as a savage version of *Johnnie Lad*. One might describe *Johnnie Lad* as bearing a similar relationship to the Scottish folk-song revival as *How High the Moon* did to the modern jazz movement of the 1940s. Two more versions of it crop up on Collector EPs by **Robin Hall**, a singer with an agreeable but sometimes monotonous style. As *Jinkin' You*, *My Johnnie Lad*, a tender, country love-song, it can be heard on JES6, while JES5 presents **Robin Hall** and **Jimmy MacGregor** singing an urban variant, cocky and derisive, full of local patriotism and completely divorced in

theme and manner from the country version. But an anti-romantic spirit is well to the fore on JES5, for this EP also contains that snook-cocking song *The Wee Magic Stane*, in addition to *Duke Street Jail* and *You Canna Shove Your Granny Off A Bus* (to the tune of *She'll Be Comin' Round The Mountain*).

The Wee Magic Stane also turns up on a Collector standard 45 (JDS2), coupled with *The Dundee Weaver*, reissued from an earlier **Robin Hall** EP (JES2). The playing-times of these two sides, incidentally, are 3½ and 1½ minutes respectively. Another Collector 45, but a duller one, brings together *The Day We Went To Rothesay* and *The Ballad Of Johnny Ramensky* (JDS1). As well as *Johnnie Lad*, JES6 also contains the delicate *Skippin' Barfitt Thro' The Heather* and *The Bonnie Lass O' Fyvie*, the tragic narrative of the latter being given ironic value by the jaunty tune which underlies it. **Robin Hall**, though, is better singing the lighter, livelier ballads; he cannot quite do justice to the slow, elegiac songs. His performance of *MacPherson's Ran* (JES7), for instance, celebrating the Scottish outlaw and folk-hero, cannot be compared with Jeannie Robertson's (reviewed below). The best track on JES7, in fact, is probably *My Bonnie Laddie's Lang A-Growin'*, a song very similar to the Irish *Bonny Boy*, which Dominic Behan recorded on JE1 1. As with most of these Collector EPs, the recording quality is decidedly uneven.

Jeannie Robertson, of course, is in a different class. Here is a singer who rises to the stature of the songs she performs. As Mr. A. L. Lloyd has written, she is "one of the finest ballad-singers in Western Europe". Paradoxically enough, her singing has such dynamic force and range that its true quality is seldom captured by recording engineers. None of the four EPs reviewed here, for instance, is really satisfactory from a recording point of view. "Jeannie's Merry Muse" (H.M.V. 7EG8534), "tender and ribald songs of Scotland", comes nearest, but is spoilt (on my copy, at any rate) by pre-echo. Especially to be recommended on this EP are versions of *Enst Upon A Time* and the eighteenth-century song, *The Laird O' Windy Wa's*. The singing here is unaccompanied, as it is on Collector JES1, a slightly disappointing EP, but containing a splendid performance of *The Gallowa' Hills*. On the two remaining EPs Jeannie Robertson is usually accompanied—a little incongruously—by a guitarist. "I Ken Where I'm Going" (JES8) however contains an unaccompanied performance of *McPherson's Farewell* that pierces right to the heart. *The Two Brothers*, one of the greatest Scottish folk-songs, is performed in all its elegiac power on Collector JES4. Despite the fluctuating quality of the recording, these EPs are all of outstandingly high quality, the work of the finest singer of folk ballads to be found anywhere in the British Isles.

CHARLES FOX.

STAGE AND SCREEN

Rose-Marie (Friml; Stothart; Harbach; Hammerstein II). Soloists, Chorus and Orch. (R.C.A. 12 in. LP Mono RD27143; ★Stereo SF5046, 27s. plus 8s. 9½d. P.T.).

Desert Song (Romberg; Hammerstein II; Harbach; Mandell). Soloists, Chorus and Orch. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP Mono CLP1274; ★Stereo CSD1272, 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.).

Lilac Time (Schubert, arr. Berte and Clutsam; Ross). Soloists, Chorus and Orch. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP ★Stereo CSD1265, 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.). Mono: CLP1248 (5/50).

Chu-Chin-Chow (Norton; Asche). Soloists, Chorus and Orch. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP ★Stereo CSD1268, 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.). Mono: CLP1289 (7/59).

Wonderful Show Songs. Soloists, Chorus and Orch. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP Mono CLP1311, 25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.).

Songs from **Lilac Time** (H.M.V. Mono 7EG8522; ★Stereo GES5775). **Chu-Chin-Chow** (H.M.V. Mono 7EG8523; ★Stereo GES5776). **Rose-Marie** (H.M.V. ★Stereo GES5765). Mono 7EG8415—2/59).

Bitter Sweet (H.M.V. Mono 7EG8524; ★Stereo GES5777). **Lilac Domino** (H.M.V. Mono 7EG8525; ★Stereo GES5778). **Merry Widow** (H.M.V. ★Stereo GES5770). Mono 7EG8509—1/60). **Belle of New York** (H.M.V. ★Stereo GES5769). Mono 7EG8442—6/50). **New Moon** (H.M.V. ★Stereo GES5760). Mono 7EG8404—1/50). **Vagabond King** (Col. ★Stereo ESG7772; Mono SEG7930—12/50).

Maid of the Mountains (H.M.V. ★Stereo GES5766). Mono 7EG8413—1/50). **No, No, Nanette** (Col. ★Stereo ESG7755; Mono SEG7883—6/50). All with Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra. (H.M.V. and Columbia Mono and Stereo 7 in. EPs, 8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T. each).

Songs from **Merry Widow**. Soloists, Chorus and Orch. (Philips 7 in. EP Mono NBE11104, 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 0½d. P.T.).

Memories of Ivor Novello. Vanessa Lee, etc. (H.M.V. 7 in. EP Mono 7EG8513; ★Stereo GES5771, 8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.).

Wonderful. Vanessa Lee and Orch. (H.M.V. 7 in. EP Mono 7EG8529; ★Stereo GES5779, 8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.).

Judging by this month's spate of LPs and EPs, and other recent issues, the musicals of pre-war days are enjoying a new lease of life. Many of them, if not all, are worth it. Starting with LPs, *Rose Marie* and *The Desert Song* come out simultaneously in stereo and mono. These two great Drury Lane successes of 1925 and 1927 have never lost their popularity. Barring Gilbert and Sullivan operas they must have been the most popular of all amateur operatic society productions during the immediate pre- and post-war years. I am old enough to

remember Billy Merson and Derek Oldham in the former, Harry Welchman in the latter and Edith Day in both of them and they added touches that I miss in the records, good as they are. Julie Andrews is very charming (and, as always, superbly clear) as *Rose Marie* and has an excellent partner in Georgio Tozzi, a baritone of the Metropolitan Opera, New York, but Meier Tzeiniker disappoints me woefully as Hard-Boiled Herman. The principals in *The Desert Song* include Edmund Hockridge, June Bronhill, who has become thoroughly at home in such roles since she appeared in the Sadler's Wells *Merry Widow*, Julie Dawn, the ever-reliable Inia Te Wiata and, surprise of surprises, Bruce Forsyth is brought in to sing one song, "It". All in all then thoroughly satisfactory mementoes of two great musicals in which the stereo versions have the edge on those in single channel form if only by a small margin.

The next two LPs are stereo versions of mono releases which Michael Cox reviewed in May and July 1959 respectively and I have little to add to what he said except to stress the pleasantness of the stereo spread of sound. Like him I have always found the lyrics of *Lilac Time* destructive of much of my enjoyment of the music; I should add that to hear some of the music in a form other than that intended by the composer is sometimes disturbing too. I echo his wish for a new version and although he asks that it be for "his generation" I hope to live long enough to hear one. But all this does not detract at all from excellent performances by June Bronhill, Thomas Round and John Cameron, well supported orchestrally, with recording that is both bright and warm.

To quote Mr. Cox again, I too wonder what Mr. Norman Newell contributed to the making of the *Chu Chin Chow* selection to warrant mention on the sleeve for "Record Production". By an odd coincidence I am writing this on the very day after that on which *Salad Days* broke the 40-year old record of *Chu Chin Chow* for the longest run of a musical. It was a very good show indeed and here Inia Te Wiata fills the role of Oscar Asche admirably and is well supported by Julie Bryan and Barbara Leigh

as well as by the chorus and orchestra. Again I note some departures from the original but they are, I think, harmless if not improvements.

"Wonderful Show Songs" is an anthology of selected tracks from previously or simultaneously issued LPs and EPs of musicals of pre-war days. Played right through, as I had to do, it sounds bit like a dealer's "sampler" disc, for which purpose it is admirably suited. Thirteen shows are represented and the singers include June Bronhill, Julie Bryan, Vanessa Lee, Thomas Round and Inia Te Wiata, among others.

The *Lilac Time* and *Chu Chin Chow* EPs are taken from the LPs reviewed above and are equally successful with their bigger brothers in both mono and stereo forms. The *Rose Marie* EP however, is not taken from the full-length selection with which this column starts but from that with Elizabeth Larner and Andy Cole in the principal roles and which I reviewed very favourably last October.

Of the two EPs which are issued simultaneously in single and double channel recordings I commend *Bitter Sweet* wholeheartedly. It is, I think, Noel Coward's best score, presented in first class style by Vanessa Lee, Roberto Cardinali and Julie Dawn and very well recorded; views which Mr. Cox expressed when he reviewed the LPs from which this selection is taken, in February and April 1959 respectively. With *The Lilac Domino* I am much less familiar. Produced in 1918 I never saw it either in London or on tour and I have never seen an amateur production. I am not even familiar with the music except the rather commonplace waltz. Now I have heard it I doubt if it is worth reviving even on EP, although Aileen Cochrane, ably supported by Charles Young, gets all there is to be got out of it.

The Belle of New York is a very different kettle of fish. Here is some of the most charming music from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a period that seems to have been particularly rich in melody and inventiveness, splendidly presented by Mary Thomas and Barry Kent in excellent stereo sound. My colleague was enthusiastic when he reviewed the mono version in June 1959. I am even more so about the stereo issue.

The other five stereo versions of previously issued mono EPs which have already been reviewed are a little more realistic in the new sound. The performances may be summed up as: *Merry Widow*, first rate; *New Moon* and *Vagabond King*, very good; *Maid of the Mountains* and *No, No, Nanette*, good, but rather spoiled by the comparative inadequacy of the "warming up" of the original scores.

The Philips *Merry Widow* competes in part but not in whole with the EP from H.M.V. so far as material is concerned. Of the respective merits of the performances it is rather difficult to speak. Both Dorothy Kirsten and Robert Rounseville sing well but there is less of the attractive stage atmosphere of the H.M.V. recording and I do not like the hesitations in the slow playing of the waltz.

Vanessa Lee is the heroine of the last records. M.C. was very pleased with the mono release of the Ivor Novello songs in June last except for a lack of theatrical excitement in the orchestral and choral arrangements. The stereo issue pleases me greatly; possibly the enhanced sound brings in a little of what my colleague found lacking. "Wonderful" contains "Wonderful, Wonderful Day" from the film *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, "I have dreamed" and "Hello Young Lovers" from *The King and I*, and "So in love" from *Kiss me, Kate*, all of which are eminently suited to Miss Lee's voice and style. Stereo and mono issues are equally desirable with a slight bias towards the former.

W. A. CHISLETT.

Bart for Bart's Sake (Bart). Lionel Bart with orchestral accompaniment. (Decca 10 in. Mono LP LF1324—17s. 3d. plus 5s. 7½d. P.T.).
South Pacific (Rodgers and Hammerstein II) and **Gigi** (Lerner and Loewe). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra cond. by Cyril Stapleton. (Decca Acc of Clubs 12 in. Mono LP ACL1010—15s. 10d. plus 5s. 2d. P.T.).
Solomon and Sheba (Nascimbene). Film soundtrack. (London 12 in. Mono LP HA-T2221—27s. plus 8s. 9½d. P.T.). **Ben-Hur** (Rozsa). Film soundtrack. (M.G.M. 12 in. LP MGM-C802—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.). **On the Beach** (Gold). (London 12 in. Mono LP HA-T2227—27s. plus 8s. 9½d. P.T.). Film soundtrack. Columbia 12 in. Mono LP 33SX1208—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.).
Walt Disney Cartoons. Selections from the Soundtracks. (Top Rank 7 in. Mono EP JKP2029-34—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T. each).

Lionel Bart's record has come my way because it includes the composer's own performances of numbers from *Lock Up Your Daughters* and *Fings Aint Wot They Used T'Be*. He gives his own highly individual version of two songs from each show and throws in a handful of more or less sophisticated revue numbers to complete the disc. As far as I know, the numbers have not actually been used in any revues but I'm willing to bet they were submitted to several. The performance is bright and uninhibited but the style is limited, the best thing about it is the accompaniment directed, quite brilliantly, by Laurie Johnson. The two songs from *Fings* plus "Dear Mum" and "Dr. Kinsey Says" are also available on an EP, DFE6619.

Cyril Stapleton's selections from *South Pacific* and *Gigi* make a very successful bargain disc. We can allow ourselves a touch of national pride in the well-chosen singers, lively chorus and respectful but punchy arrangements. I am glad that an English orchestra and an English company can turn out economy

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versions as good as this, if only to give more weight to my criticism of the high-priced, star studded, stereophonic coupling of *Gigi* and *My Fair Lady* which I reviewed last month. Top Rank/Disneyland have very sensibly issued the songs from Disney's films on a series of EPs. Disney's mixture of humour and sentiment, is echoed faithfully by the composers who worked for him—you may find it nauseating or nostalgic pretty. My own favourites are *Bambi* (JKP2032), *Pinocchio* (2033), *Dumbo* (2031) and, of course, *Snow White* (2029)—*Cinderella* (2030) and *Peter Pan* (2034) complete the set. Cliff Richard's numbers from the film of *Expresso Bongo* are collected on an EP, mono SEG7971 and stereo ESG7783. Only one of these comes from the original show and I prefer James Kenney's version on the original cast recording. Philips have issued title songs from Frankie Vaughan's films on an EP called *Frank in Films* (BBE12317), unattractive songs, poorly sung, but it's a convenient coupling for the fans.

An original cast recording of *Make Me an Offer* has been announced but so far only David Heneker's own piano selection has turned up for review—the tunes are pleasant and the composer plays jangle piano with Geoff Love's orchestra (H.M.V. 45 POP691). The three soundtrack LPs are uniformly boring—*Solomon and Sheba* is all percussion, *On the Beach* is all "Waltzing Matilda" and *Ben-Hur* is the usual Biblical military mishmash, a Hollywood hymnal of cliché and bathos. *On the Beach* also turns up in a shorter and better arrangement on London HAT2222, but the backing, "Film Themes from Hollywood", is impossibly dull.

MICHAEL COX.

it is left to the Count at the keyboard to provide the only outstanding moments. The breathlessly enthusiastic sleeve note, which gives the name of the American magazine with the sole photographic rights of the Convention but fails to include a list of soloists, refers to Snoopy Young's trumpet holding the crowd spellbound in *Let's Have A Little Taste*. In fact no trumpet can be heard on this track, apart from four high notes at the end. It must be easy to mesmerize a gaggle of disc jockeys.

This is routine Basic, essential only to those enthusiasts compiling a complete collection of the band on record. As an example of orchestral jazz it is much less rewarding than the recent Harry James LPs on M.G.M. and Capitol.

A.M.

Mr. Acker Bilk and his Paramount Jazz Band

"The Seven Ages of Acker"
In A Persian Market: I'm Going Home (V): **Ory's Creole Trombone: Summer Set: Let The Light From The Lighthouse Shine** (V): **The Gay Hussar/Tiger Rag: Lucky Rock: Cushion Foot Stomp: Run Come See Jerusalem** (V): **Old Comrades March**. (Columbia 12 in. LP 33SX1205—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.).

Summer Set/Acker's Away.

(Columbia 7 in. 45-DB4382—4s. 6d. plus 1s. 6d. P.T.). "Mr. Acker Bilk Requests—Part 2"
Dardanella: Franklin Street Blues/Easter Parade: Marching Through Georgia. (Pye-Nixa 7 in. EP NJE1072—9s. 3d. plus 3s. 0½d. P.T.).

It would seem that Mr. Acker Bilk's Paramount Jazz Band is now the biggest jazz attraction of its kind in Britain today. Certainly it draws the crowds. And I feel that Mr. Bilk must be commended for his choice of unusual numbers on these recordings, although the use of *In A Persian Market* makes me wonder (a) if this tune is taking root as a jazz "standard", and (b) if some day soon a trad band will present similar versions of other Ketelby numbers. Another trend is the inclusion of marches in the jazz repertoire. All very well, all very good; many marches make excellent vehicles for jazz, which is based on march music anyway. The two items on the Columbia 45 are perhaps the most attractive, one of them coming off the LP, the other off an EP that I reviewed a few months ago. *Summer Set*, it seems, has already acquired a following among the general public, a public that seems ready to take sizeable doses of clarinet and rhythm—in this case augmented by the elegant but solid piano playing of Mr. D. Collett. The rest of the LP is largely a case of the mixture as before: good jazz for dancing, rather rough and definitely not Bilk-and-water. The EP we've heard already; it was made nearly two years ago. All I need say is that I found it easier listening, perhaps because the recording is much more mellow.

O.K.

John Coltrane with the Red Garland Trio

Traneing In: Slow Dance/Bass Blues: You Leave Me Breathless: Soft Lights and Sweet Music (Esquire 12 in. LP 32-091—23s. 6d. plus 9s. 3½d. P.T.).

It was only last spring, when I heard his work on the Miles Davis LP "Milestones" (reviewed in THE GRAMOPHONE for May, 1959), that I really began getting much pleasure out of John Coltrane's tenor playing. Up to then his fondness for the unusual interval and the unconventional phrasal had often seemed prompted by perversity rather than adventure, and his tone was that of a man who scowled all the time. Taken together, these two characteristics resulted in his solos possessing, for me, a certain nagging quality. But with "Milestones", recorded early in 1958, there seemed to be an advance towards clarity as well as an exciting mixing of audacity and intensity.

The tracks on this new LP were recorded a year earlier—in August, 1957—and present a tenor player who falls about half-way between the musician I disliked and the one I admire. Coltrane certainly has fluency, but it can be

JAZZ AND SWING

Reviewed by

CHARLES FOX, ALUN MORGAN AND OLIVER KING

Kenny Ball and his Band

Black Bottom Stomp: Hiawatha Rag/Baby Doll (Collector 7 in. EP JEN2—9s. 9½d. plus 3s. 2½d. P.T.).

A fiery trumpet player, Kenny Ball, and unlike some others in the same line of business (i.e. "trad" jazz), can lead his band. The band itself is quite a competent unit, although it makes rather heavy weather of Morton's *Black Bottom Stomp*, and the rhythm section (especially when laying down a rhumba beat for the first strain of *Hiawatha*) sounds terribly busy. Nowhere is there any real relaxation. *Baby Doll*, which occupies the whole of the second side, is particularly angular and cumbersome. The sleeve-notes take the form of an imaginary telephone conversation between two members of the Chelsea set. In the words of one of them, "Take no notice of it".

O.K.

Count Basie and his Orchestra

"Breakfast Dance And Barbecue"
In a Mellow Tone: Five O'Clock In The Morning (V): **Counter Block: Who, Me? Let's Have A Taste: Moten Swing: Hallelujah I Love Her So** (V): **One O'Clock Jump**. (Columbia 12 in. LP ★Stereo SCX3294, mono 33SX1209—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.).

In jazz familiarity breeds, well perhaps not contempt but certainly disappointment. The new Basie band which thrilled so many of us when its first LP was issued, has become one of the most predictable and mannered of units, although it retains its ability to swing at any tempo. The element of surprise is lacking.

Perhaps I am in the minority, but I confess to feeling blasé about new Basic LPs such as this, records which merely repeat a formula. All the arrangers seem to be conforming to a pattern pre-determined by some mysterious Establishment, a pattern in which the unvarying four-square rhythm section determines the character of the scores. I suppose an original ensemble style is desirable, but there should also be a number of really good soloists to put gilt on the gingerbread, and good soloists are absent from the Count's present band. Frank Foster, Frank Wess, Billy Mitchell, Thad Jones, etc., are capable, inventive musicians but they lack the originality and presence of Lester Young, Don Byas, Wardell Gray and Buck Clayton. All too often the present Basic band turns in a competent, swinging performance which fails to catch fire, and fails, often enough, to exceed normal blood-heat.

That last sentence sums up the LP under review, recorded "live" during the early hours of one morning last May at a disc-jockey convention in Miami. (I wonder what they found to discuss!). Despite some occasional "in-concert" excitement, the band often sounds tired and spiritless, the section work less than perfect at times. Even the addition of Harry Edison (who plays a good solo on *One O'Clock Jump*) fails to spark off much enthusiasm. Joe Williams goes through the motions of singing the blues (an act I always find embarrassing), and

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curiously unmelodic in its manifestations, often demonstrating itself in the ability to rush through chord changes at a furious pace, rather as Paul Gonsalves does with Duke Ellington. Both Gonsalves and Coltrane, in fact, possess much keener harmonic intuition than melodic sense. To this category must be apportioned the awesome, improbably fast playing on *Soft Lights and Sweet Music*.

At his best (and his best pops up for short intervals on most of these tracks) Coltrane aims at getting the kind of shrill, lyrical quality which informed Charlie Parker's work. Playing with a bitter, disenchanted tone, he deploys fast, multi-noted runs against laconic phrases. *Traneing* and *Bass Blues* are both twelve-bar blues, taken at a brisk pace, the latter featuring some fine bowed bass work by Paul Chambers. *Slow Dance* and *You Leave Me Breathless* are treated in a more leisurely fashion. Coltrane is accompanied by Red Garland (piano), Paul Chambers (bass) and Art Taylor (drums), although Garland in particular acts as much more than an accompanist. The opening of *Traneing*, for instance, performed only by the rhythm section, is astonishingly exuberant. Garland's solos are often quite daring, ranging from a lacy kind of romanticism (*Slow Dance*), through choruses of Garner-like chording to the skidding, beautifully nimble playing on *Traneing*. C.F.

Eddie Condon and his All-Stars
Fidgety Feet: Just Friends/I'll Be A Friend With Pleasure: Louisiana.
(Philips 7 in. EP BBE12280—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

These tracks come off an LP recorded in 1955 and 1956, and are reissued as part of Philips' "Jazz Olympian" series. There is some pleasing music here, notably from Dick Carey's alto horn (not alto sax, as the sleeve infers) and from tame Bill Davison in *Just Friends*, but I hardly think it warrants Olympian status. Davison, I may say, sounds almost cool, both in tone and phrasing. O.K.

Miles Davis and The Modern Jazz Giants
"Bags' Groove"

Airegin: Oleo: But Not For Me (Take One): Doxy: But Not For Me (Take One)/Bags' Groove (Take One): Bags' Groove (Take Two).
(Esquire 12 in. LP 32-090—28s. 6d. plus 9s. 3d. P.T.)

Miles Davis Quintet

Miles' Theme: There Is No Greater Love.
(Esquire 7 in. EP EP222—9s. 9d. plus 3s. 2d. P.T.)

Miles Davis Sextet

Billy Boy/Dr. Jekyll.
(Fontana 7 in. EP TFE17195—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

Straight, No Chaser/Pts. 1 & 2.

Fontana 7 in. EP TFE17197—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

Milestones/Two Bass Hit.

Fontana 7 in. EP TFE17293—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

"Kind Of Blue"

So What: Freddie Freeloader: Blue In Green/All Blues: Flamenco Sketches.

Fontana 12 in. LP LP6072—27s. plus 8s. 9d. P.T.)

I have listed these new Miles Davis releases in chronological order of recording; all but the Fontana LP are reissues although Esquire 32-090 contains two new, alternative "takes" as well as the originally released versions. Miles Davis' work is the very essence of contemporary jazz, a calm, quiet voice speaking confidently and yet sensitively. Despite the assertions of his many detractors, he has always reflected the best in jazz, if by "best" one means tone, melody, swing, taste, unshackled ideas and a deep appreciation of the blues. In recent years he has become recognised as a man who can extend the vocabulary of jazz without losing any of its character, as opposed to those pseudo-intellectuals whose idea of "respectability" is to incorporate into their music some half-digested cribs from European composers' work.

The records under review span a period of nearly five years (June, 1954, to April, 1959), and demonstrate the changes which have taken place in Miles' regular group. Esquire 32-090 is not by a permanent personnel, although *Airegin*, *Oleo*, etc., feature a group of musicians

(Davis, Sonny Rollins, Horace Silver, Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke) who played at New York clubs on several occasions. *Airegin*, *Oleo* and *Day* are three particularly fine tracks, with all five men in brilliant form. *But Not For Me* is simply a sequence of solos at medium tempo and the inclusion of an alternative take of this weaker track is questionable. The reverse side contains the superlative *Bags' Groove (Take One)* (which originally occupied one complete side of a ten-inch LP, *Esquire 20-052*) and an alternative take which is almost as good. These tracks come from the hectic session held on Xmas Eve, 1954, when Miles led a jazz session group completed by Milt Jackson, Thelonious Monk, Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke. By any jazz standards *Bags' Groove (Take One)* is a classic performance, containing one of Miles' best solos on record and an equally impressive series of choruses from Milt Jackson. Monk, who does not perform at all while Miles is playing, turns in remarkably different solos on the two takes. Musically this LP is excellent while the generous playing-time of forty-seven minutes makes it a bargain at the price.

The Esquire EP comes from the first LP (32-021) by Miles' "new" quintet (Coltrane, Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones), although *No Greater Love* is actually a quartet performance by Miles (muted) and the rhythm section. *Miles' Theme* is a tune which has been recorded under a variety of titles and provides a good vehicle for Chambers, Davis and Coltrane. The three Fontana EPs are by the same personnel, plus alto saxist Cannonball Adderley, a musician whose playing adds little or nothing to the artistic level of the quintet's music, simply because he is an eclectic, predictable soloist, out-classed by his colleagues. All three EPs are reissues from Fontana TFL5035 (which I reviewed in May, 1959) and complete the LP, with the exception of the lengthy *Sid's Ahead*. The selection of titles is a little odd. *Billy Boy* is by piano, bass and drums only—in other words the Red Garland Trio—while Miles does not solo at all on *Two Bass Hit*. The best of the three EPs is TFE17197, *Straight No Chaser*, with good to excellent solos by all concerned. During the course of his piano choruses Garland block-chords the whole of Miles' original solo from *Now's The Time*, recorded in 1945 with Charlie Parker. *Two Bass Hit*, or *La Ronde*, contains some breathtaking drumming by Jones which should make any struggling amateur want to put aside his sticks for ever.

The Fontana LP, "Kind Of Blue", is again by the sextet, but with Bill Evans and Jimmy Cobb in place of Garland and Jones. Evans sounds like the kind of pianist Dave Brubeck hopes to become some day, and although Cobb is less of an individualist than Philly Joe Jones he gets a lovely smooth sound from side drum and open cymbal. The influence of Gil Evans is notable throughout in the sense that the material is challenging. *Blue In Green*, which has some superlative trumpet playing, is a ten-bar blues while on some other tracks the soloists are given a scale to improvise on in place of a chord sequence. Bill Evans claims that Miles conceived the settings only a few hours before the sessions and that "the group had never played these pieces before the recordings". This makes the performance level even more remarkable, for this is undoubtedly one of the best Davis records to be issued in recent years. There is insufficient space to discuss the tracks in detail, added to which there is the problem of tune identification on the second side. I have listed the titles in their label order, but Benny Green's sleeve note makes me doubt the accuracy of this sequence. His description of *Flamenco Sketches* (a twelve-bar using a 6/8 time signature) fits the music labelled *All Blues*, and vice-versa. I leave

Mr. Green to sort this out with the Philips people; whatever the truth, it won't spoil my enjoyment of the music. A.M.

Maynard Ferguson and his Orchestra

"A Message From Birdland"

Oleo: Starfire: The Mark Of Jazz/Night Life: Stella By Starlight: Lonely Time: Back In The Satellite Again.
(Columbia 12 in. LP ★Stereo SCX3245, mono 33SX1210—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4d. P.T.)

Maynard Ferguson's third LP for the Roulette label was recorded in New York's Birdland club last June. It is the best yet from a band which, with luck, will take its place amongst the leading permanent jazz orchestras. A blazing enthusiasm is allied to the seven very good arrangements, written by trombonist Slide Hampton (*Oleo*, *The Mark Of Jazz* and *Stella By Starlight*), Benny Golson (*Starfire* and *Night Life*), Marty Paich (*Lonely Time*) and Willie Maiden (*Back In The Satellite Again*). Ferguson leads and plays with intelligence, delegating some trumpet solo passages to his colleagues. The fluent trumpet playing on Sonny Rollins' tune *Oleo* is the work of young Jerry Tyree, for instance, while on the ballad *Stella By Starlight* Clyde Reasinger plays lead in place of Ferguson, who switches to trombone. This is a step or two in the right direction, for in solos Ferguson's tortured tone still leaves much to be desired; as a section man, however, his playing is exemplary. Jimmy Ford, who made his recorded debut with Red Rodney a decade ago, plays alto in a style strongly reminiscent of Phil Woods and is outstanding in the frantic *Mark Of Jazz*. Willie Maiden and Slide Hampton are also featured, the former on *Lonely Time*, while an Austrian pianist, Joe Zawinul, makes an impressive debut.

There are times when the ensemble work seems unnecessarily rowdy, due principally to the energetic drumming of Frankie Dunlop. Ferguson deserves full credit for the formation and continuing growth of his present group, for it is only in bands such as this that young jazzmen can hope to gain experience. A.M.

Ella Fitzgerald

"Sings The George and Ira Gershwin Song Book"

Vol. 1.

Sam and Delilah: But Not For Me: My One And Only: Let's Call The Whole Thing Off: Beginner's Luck/Oh, Lady Be Good: Nice Work If You Can Get It: Things Are Looking Up: Just Another Rhumba: How Long Has This Been Going On?
(H.M.V. 12 in. LP ★Stereo CSD1202, mono CLP1338—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4d. P.T.)

Vol. 2.

'S Wonderful: The Man I Love: That Certain Feeling: By Strauss: Someone To Watch Over Me: The Real American Folk Song/Who Cares: Looking For A Boy: They All Laughed: My Cousin From Milwaukee: Somebody From Somewhere.
(H.M.V. 12 in. LP ★Stereo CSD1293, mono CLP1339—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4d. P.T.)

Lightning, or so superstition has it, never strikes twice in the same place. Yet Ella Fitzgerald, who in 1950 recorded a 10-inch Brunswick LP (LA8648), "Ella Sings Gershwin", with the pianist Ellis Larkins, has now done an even more thorough job on the same composer. And just as that Brunswick LP ranks among her very best work, so this new set looks like creeping into the same exalted class. There will, I understand, be five LPs altogether, the remaining three records being scheduled to appear in May and July. All present Ella accompanied by Nelson Riddle and his orchestra.

As is her custom when interpreting the songs of individual composers, Ella adopts a more demure, more respectful approach than on less inhibited occasions. And that is right and proper, for in an album of this kind the songs are just as important as the singer. It will be no surprise for readers to learn, therefore, that Ella, always a remarkably consistent performer, sounds just as immaculate as ever, her diction so well scrubbed that we can relish every syllable of Ira Gershwin's lyrics.

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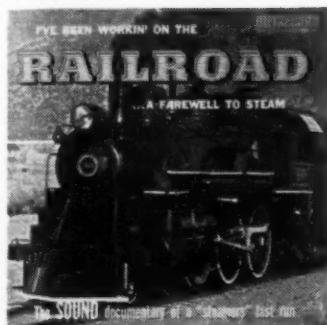
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These two volumes include quite a few obscure items. I hadn't heard *Sam and Delilah*, for instance, since Duke Ellington recorded it back in 1931 (It must be one of the Ellington band's worst performances). By Strauss, *My Cousin From Milwaukee, Who Cares* and *Somebody From Somewhere* are also splendidly sung and well worth the revival. I wasn't so happy, however, about *The Real American Folk Song*, despite the light-hearted treatment and the authentic-sounding ragtime piano, although it is interesting to hear one of Gershwin's very earliest compositions. But there was no excuse at all for letting *Just Another Rhumba*—a pleasant but not at all remarkable item—go on quite so long.

C.F.

Bud Freeman Quintet

"The Jazz Scene"

Newport-News: At Sundown/Exactly Like You: Let's Do It.
(Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8783—8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.)

There is something distinctly oceanic about Bud Freeman's tenor playing. At one moment it may suggest the flight of a dolphin, at the next the lurch of a porpoise. It was not for nothing that he first became famous playing a tune called *The Eel*. On this EP he sounds as deft as ever, whether constructing lithe solos, as intricate as seaweed, or else swapping ideas with Ruby Braff. Sometimes Braff's trumpet playing has been too squashy, too sugary for my taste, but here he blows cleanly and jauntily, always with an undertone of lyricism. The pianist, Kenneth Kersey, something of an avant-garde musician back in the early 1940s, takes some good solos and fits inside an excellent rhythm section that also contains Al Hall and George Wetting. This really is an admirable EP. All four tracks were at one time available on a London LP.

C.F.

Stan Getz Quartet/Quintet

"At Storyville"—Vol. 2

Hershey Bar: Rubberneck: Signal: Everything Happens To Me/Jumpin' With Symphony Sid: Yesterday's: Bud.
(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12199—27s. 6d. plus 8s. 11½d. P.T.)

"The Soft Swing"

This Can't Be Love: Time After Time: Smiles: All God's Chillun Got Rhythm/All The Things You Are: To The Ends Of The Earth: Bye Bye Blues: Down Beat.
(H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1320—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.)

The *Vogue* LP is a second volume of recordings taped by an anonymous enthusiast in the autumn of 1951, when the Stan Getz Quintet (Getz, Al Haig, Jimmy Raney, Teddy Kotick, Tiny Kahn) was appearing at the Storyville Club in Boston. (The first volume, released on *Vogue* LAE12158, was reviewed by Alan Morgan in April, 1959.) Considering all the circumstances, and particularly the fact that a portable tape recorder was used, it's hardly surprising that the quality of the sound often falls below commercial standards. What matters, though, is the music, and that—although always interesting—is not quite equal to the tracks on the first volume. Getz sounds curiously wayward, sometimes even a trifle incoherent, and apart from his sensitive playing in *Yesterday's* I found most of his solos distinctly below par. The really impressive man on the record is Al Haig, not merely because he is a vital part of a highly persuasive rhythm section but for the crisp, functional quality of his solos. Jimmy Raney also performs well, in a typically casual, almost flippant manner.

The H.M.V. recordings, made six years later, present Getz with two different groups. On the first four tracks he is accompanied by Lou Levy, Leroy Vinnegar and Stan Levey; on the second four by Mose Allison, Addison Farmer and Jerry Segal. The former group, in fact, is exactly the same as that which worked with him on "The Steamer" (H.M.V. CLP1276, reviewed in October, 1959) and the music on these tracks keeps up an extremely high level.

The rhythm section fits closely around Getz, and in addition Lou Levy takes some excellent piano solos (he is particularly scintillating in *Smiles*). *This Can't Be Love*, the last number to be played at the session (and completed in one "take", by the way), has Getz improvising in an unexpectedly reckless fashion, exhibiting the buccaneering side of his musical character. On the whole, though, he sounds on this LP much more like Lester Young than he does on the *Vogue* issue, yet he always uses the style in a very personal way. The second side finds him lurching a little here and there, for the rhythm section is not so unified. Getz plays particularly well, however, on *To The Ends Of The Earth*, a pop-song with a chord sequence very like that of *Lover Man*.

C.F.

Stan Getz and the Oscar Peterson Trio**Pennies From Heaven/Bronx Blues.**
(H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8556—8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.)

These titles were recorded towards the end of the last "Jazz at the Philharmonic" tour undertaken by Stan Getz in America, and find him in the congenial company of Oscar Peterson (one of his favourite pianists). Herb Ellis and Ray Brown. The fact that there is no drummer matters little, for all four men have a metronomic sense of time, and when a "brush" rhythm is needed Ellis provides it by caressing the strings of his guitar. Tenor and piano share the solo space on *Pennies From Heaven* (previously recorded by Getz for the Roost label and available here on *Vogue*) and Stan acknowledges his debt to Lester Young in a more open manner than usual. The *Blues* is played slowly and sincerely, Getz and Ellis making several unsophisticated statements; this is a good track and, from the sound of the codas and the preceding chorus, the four musicians were reluctant to finish.

A.M.

Benny Goodman

"The Benny Goodman Treasure Chest"

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot: Dear Old Southland: When Buddha Smiles (Orchestra): Diga Diga Doo (Quartet): Whispers in the Dark (Trio): Madhouse/Three Little Words (Orchestra): I Surrender Dear (Trio): Chicago (Orchestra): Tea For Two (Quartet): Can't We Be Friends: I Know That You Know (Orchestra).
(M.G.M. 12 in. LP C805—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.)

Vol. 2
Hallelujah! (Orchestra): Marie (Trio): Avalon (Quartet): If Dreams Come True (Orchestra): Nobody's Sweetheart (Trio): I Got Rhythm (Quartet): Big John Special (Orchestra): Remember Me (Trio): Bach Goes To Town (Orchestra): Limehouse Blues (Quartet): Space Man (Lionel Hampton and Jess Stacy, piano duet): Honeyuckles Rock (Orchestra).
(M.G.M. 12 in. LP C807—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.)

Vol. 3
All The Cats Join In (V. Orchestra): Grand Slam (Quintet): Fascinating Rhythm (Orchestra): If I Had You (Sextet): Clarinade (Orchestra): Only Another Boy And Girl (V. Quintet): The Earl (Orchestra): I Can't Give You Anything But Love (Septet): Oomph Fah Fah (Sextet): Swing Angel (Orchestra): Rose Room (Sextet): Man Here Plays Fine Piano (V. Orchestra): Body And Soul (Trio): String Of Pearls (Orchestra): Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye (V. Quintet): Rattle And Roll (Orchestra).
(Fontana 12 in. LP TFL5067—27s. plus 8s. 9d. P.T.)

Readers old enough to have admired the Benny Goodman orchestra back in the 1930s, when it was at the peak of its fame and influence, will probably enjoy the two M.G.M. LPs much more than the younger generation of jazz aficionados. These are the first two volumes of a three-volume set of recordings taken from broadcasts (apparently of concert performances) which the Goodman band made in 1937 and 1938. It's scarcely surprising that the recording quality varies very considerably, but the intrinsic value of the music makes it worth enduring some of the muzzier ensemble passages. To be quite fair, none of the performances of tunes which Goodman recorded commercially (*Big John Special*, *When Buddha Smiles*, *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*, etc.) seem as exciting as the studio versions, but they are still worth hearing. In any case, quite a few of the items played here

were never actually recorded by Goodman. The best tracks on Volume 1 are the Trio performance of *Whispers In The Dark* and the big-band treatments of *Madhouse* (containing some typically staccato piano playing by Jess Stacy) and *Chicago*. In Volume 2 there is fine playing by Goodman, Teddy Wilson and Lionel Hampton in Quartet versions of *Limehouse Blues* and *I Got Rhythm*, while *Big John Special* is the best orchestral track. *Space Man* is something of an oddity, a piano duet by Lionel Hampton and Jess Stacy, with Hampton hammering out the treble line and Stacy filling in the bass.

"All The Cats Join In" gathers together recordings made between 1939 and 1946. The outstanding tracks are *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* (1940), with rather reticent Cootie Williams' trumpet but exciting solos from Goodman, Charlie Christian, George Auld and Kenneth Kersey; *Rose Room* (1939), containing amiable playing by Christian and Lionel Hampton; *Body And Soul* (1945), with Wilson and Goodman at their most elegant; and *If I Had You* (1941), including good solos from Mel Powell and Lou McGarity. McGarity, as it happens, pops up on several of the big-band tracks and is always impressive, his tone and austere phrasing reminding me of how George Chisholm used to sound. Some of the tracks (notably those with vocal choruses) are pretty dull, but on the whole the music is tasteful even when it's far from being inspired. Goodman's choice of singers, though, was nearly always distressing; the four heard here are Liza Morrow, Jane Harvey, Eve Young and Peggy Mann. *All The Cats Join In* is something of a minor curiosity, for Goodman joins in and sings a few lines himself.

Ted Heath and his Music

"Big Band Blues"

St. Louis Blues: Memphis Blues: Blues In The Night: Limehouse Blues: Basin Street Blues: The Jazz Me Blues/St. James' Infirmary: Tin Roof Blues: It's The Bluest Kind Of Blues: My Baby Sings: Honky Tonk Train Blues: A Blues Serenade: Royal Garden Blues.
(Decca 12 in. LP ★ Stereo SKL4074, Mono LK4324—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.)

Although Ted Heath records a phenomenal number of LPs every year, only a small proportion of them are really aimed at the jazz public. Of that minority two of the best are "Spotlight on Sidemen" (Decca LK4204) and "Our Kind of Jazz" (Decca LK4262), reviewed in the December, 1957, and May, 1959, issues of *THE GRAMOPHONE* respectively. But this new record, collection of blues (well, almost), is nearly of the same calibre. My quibble over the title is caused by the fact that *Limehouse Blues*, *A Blues Serenade* and *It's The Bluest Kind Of Blues* are only blues by name and not by nature. The arrangements were shared between four arrangers: Ronnie Roullier, Dave Lindup (best-known as Johnny Dankworth's staff arranger), Ralph Dillimore and Johnny Keating.

The most satisfying track is *St. Louis Blues*, deftly scored by Dave Lindup, with some splendidly taut writing for the brasses, and featuring fluent clarinet playing by Henry Mackenzie. Also outstanding is another Lindup arrangement, *Tin Roof Blues*, cast in expansive, looping phrases and containing some good passages for trombones. Particularly effective in stereo is Ronnie Roullier's treatment of *Royal Garden Blues*, with its fine scoring for the reeds. The stereo spread throughout the whole record, though, is exceptionally good.

Keith Christie is heard in several Teagenish trombone solos, although in *St. James Infirmary* he sounds more like Tricky Sam. Eddie Blair blows some lyrical trumpet on *Blues In The Night* and Bob Efford seems assured, although a little placid, during his tenor solo on *It's The Bluest Kind Of Blues*. The least interesting tracks for me were *A Blues Serenade*, featuring rather sweet soprano sax

playing by Ronnie Chamberlain, and *Honky Tonk Train Blues*. As far as the latter is concerned, I've never liked hearing boogie woogie (essentially an idiom for the piano) played by big bands, even when Tommy Dorsey and Bob Crosby were doing it before the war. C.F.

Woody Herman and his Orchestra

"Vintage '59"

Woodchopper's Ball: Pillar To Post/Midnight Sun: Lullaby Of Birdland.

(Top Rank 7 in. EP JKP2026—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

Although entitled "Vintage '59", this EP was recorded during the autumn of 1958 by the ephemeral band which Herman took on a tour of South America on behalf of the American State Department. It was not one of Woody's finest orchestras, although the thrilling brass and reed section work has that identifiable Herman stamp. The sleeve information is sketchy, listing only the personnel and giving no details of the soloists or arranger. Both *Midnight Sun* and *Lullaby Of Birdland* feature the "Four Brothers" reed voicing and sound like Ralph Burns' scores. The former is very much in the vein of *Early Autumn* and contains passages by Woody (on alto sax) and pianist Al Planck; the latter track has solos by two of the tenors (one of whom is certainly Jay Migliore) and, presumably, Willie Dennis on trombone. *Woodchopper's Ball* is a reworking of the old Herman favourite, the new arrangement utilising parts of Gigi Gryce's *Blue Concept* and Lester Young's *Jumpin' With Symphony Sid* as background riffs. Woody takes a typical clarinet chorus, followed by a tenor (Migliore?), Willie Dennis, a muted trumpet (probably Danny Stiles) and Major Holley on bass. A. K. Salim, who has written several scores for Basie, contributed *Pillar To Post*, a fast and exciting setting in which two trumpets, a tenor, Al Belletto on baritone, another tenor and Herman (again on clarinet) are to be heard.

After the South American tour several personnel changes took place, one of which brought in Don Lamphere on tenor, and then Herman brought the nucleus of his band to Britain at the beginning of 1959. The band heard on this EP is inferior to the one Woody presented in this country (few reed sections could surpass the all-British foursome of the Anglo-American Herd), but the record can be recommended to Herman enthusiasts. A.M.

Johnny Hodges

Jeep's Blues: Rent Party Blues/Dream Blues: Krum Elbow Blues.

(Krona 7 in. EP TFE17233—9s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

"Johnny Hodges And His Strings Play The Prettiest Gershwin"

Nice Work If You Can Get It: Summertime/Oh, Lady Be Good: The Man I Love.

(H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8549—8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.)

Hidden in the sleeve-note to a new Dave Brubeck LP is a quotation that throws, I think, some light upon Johnny Hodges' music. Alun Morgan tells of how the great alto saxophonist was asked what he thought about when playing one of his solos, a question prompted, no doubt, by the preoccupied air which Hodges always wears on the concert platform. (I once compared his working expression with that of an Aztec death-mask.) "Well," Johnny Hodges told his questioner, "as I play I look about the hall and try and figure out how many people it will hold. Then I try and work out how many of the seats are occupied. Then I think, if the Queen came to the concert, where would she sit?"

The significance of this story lies in its assumption that Hodges can play well merely out of habit, letting his mind roam outside the music, just as some actresses playing Ophelia can map out a shopping list in the middle of the mad scene. It is this bland, uncommitted approach which seems to be uppermost on the four tracks with strings, recorded when the Duke Ellington band was in West Germany in

1958. The strings are those of the Stuttgart Light Orchestra, and the arrangements were written by Russell Garcia. Alas, the idea of putting Hodges—the archetype of the smooth, urbane alto player—against such a background results in a very slithery set of performances, lacking even the sense of contrast that Charlie Parker provided in a similar context. *The Man I Love* and *Summertime* are especially soupy tracks, but none of the performances escapes a suggestion of complacency.

How different is the Fontana EP, a set of four recordings from 1938 and 1939, vintage years for both Johnny Hodges and Duke Ellington. Here Hodges leads a small Ellington group, with solos coming from Cootie Williams, Lawrence Brown and Harry Carney as well as himself. And Hodges at that time was playing with a vigour that seems to have rubbed off a little with the passing years. His playing on *Krum Elbow Blues* (a track that also contains some snarling trumpet from Cootie) is quite glorious; so is that on *Jeep's Blues*, the original recording of a number he still features at concerts. On *Rent Party Blues*, incidentally, a tune that goes back to 1929 and sounds exactly like Brownie McGhee's *Sportin' Life*, Hodges plays the soprano saxophone, keeping a very firm grip upon that skittish instrument.

Just in case anybody has missed the point, let me emphasize that the Fontana EP contains at least two classic performances; that it provides four splendid examples of inspired small group playing. With my hand on my heart, I urge everyone to hear it. C.F.

Milt Jackson

"Bags And Flutes"

Bags' New Groove: Sandy: Midget Rod: I'm Afraid The Masquerade Is Over/Ghana: Sweet And Lovely: Connie's Blues.

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-K15177—27s. plus 8s. 9½d. P.T.)

Several times, while listening to the over-polite approach favoured by the Modern Jazz Quartet, I have hankered after a session by Milt Jackson with a group of his own choice. Doubtless, I have thought, he would like to play with a stronger rhythm section, a more aggressive drummer, perhaps a honking tenor or two. Well, it seems I was wrong. Get him alone in a recording studio and he is likely to call in a group of supporting musicians whose combined efforts are even more effete than the MJQ in tea-party mood. After playing through the first track on side one, a barely altered *Bags' Groove* entitled *Bags' New Groove*, I looked forward to hearing something with a change of pace, something with guts and drive. I was disappointed. The whole LP consists of beautifully played musical delicacies of a type which, some years ago, would have been sneeringly dismissed as "that pale West Coast stuff". Subtlety is a valid part of the jazzman's make-up, but the amount of soporific doodlings to be heard here takes some digesting at one sitting. Flutes twitter (Frank Wess on most tracks, Bobby Jaspar on *Bags' New Groove* and *Connie's Blues*), Kenny Burrell's guitar soothes, the rhythm sections day-dream, and Milt sketches in his inventions with hesitancy, extracting the last ounce of pathos from such melodies as *Sweet And Lovely*, *I'm Afraid The Masquerade Is Over*, etc.

A.M.

Jo Jones Trio

Sweet Georgia Brown: My Blue Heaven: Jive At Five: Greensleeves: When Your Lover Has Gone: Philadelphia Bound/Close Your Eyes: I Got Rhythm (Take 1): I Got Rhythm (Take 2): Embraceable You: Bebop Ishman: Little Susie.

(Top Rank 12 in. LP 35/039—26s. 4½d. plus 8s. 7½d. P.T.)

Jo Jones' trio is completed by that talented pianist Ray Bryant and his brother, Tommy Bryant, on bass. This could have been an outstanding record, but due to the microphone positioning we hear rather too much of Jo Jones' drums for comfort. I realise that it is Jo's trio, yet I doubt if he would want us to

hear him quite so prominently, especially when he is playing brushes as accompaniment. Ray Bryant plays with the maturity and confidence we have come to expect from this young man, a performer who refuses to be pigeon-holed, and his quiet treatment of *Greensleeves* is well worth hearing. Jo, of course, plays with the snap and polish of a man whose name is mentioned with hushed reverence whenever drummers gather. It is a pity that the recording balance has given the trio such a lop-sided sound. A.M.

Barney Kessel

"Plays Carmen"

Swingin' The Toreador: A Pad On The Edge Of Town: If You Dig Me: Free As A Bird/Viva El Toro: Flowersville: Carmen's Cool: Like, There's No Place Like . . .: The Gypsy's Hip.

(Vogue-Contemporary 12 in. LP LAC12214—27s. 6d. plus 11s. 1½d. P.T.)

"Jazzing the classics" is a practice I look on with scorn; I still wince each time I hear *Moon Lover* or *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*. Theoretically, therefore, Barney Kessel's adaptations of "Carmen" should cause an abrupt rise in my blood pressure; actually they don't. Perhaps it's because the standard of musicianship is so high; perhaps it's because no attempt has been made to subjugate Georges Bizet; or perhaps I've been won over by Vernon Duke's intelligent, informative sleeve note. Whichever factor is responsible, then I am grateful, for this is a fine jazz LP with a difference. Two main groups are heard here: the first features Kessel, woodwinds and rhythm, the second replaces the woodwinds with five jazzmen, including Ray Linn and Herb Geller. Two titles—*If You Dig Me* (*Si Tu M'Aimes*) and *Carmen's Cool* (the dance which Carmen performs for Don José in Act II)—are played by a quintet, and, fittingly, Victor Feldman makes an appearance in the album on these tracks. I say "fittingly" because Vic was the first jazzman I ever heard making use of material from this opera. In July, 1955, with his quartet, he recorded the *Toreador's Song* for Equerre under the title *Item From Carmen*.

Kessel is credited with all the arrangements. He has adapted Bizet's music in a way that takes advantage of the jazz opportunities without losing the threads of the originals. Everyone on the dates seems to have been inspired by the uniqueness of the material, with the result that this is a jazz album of a very high order. I strongly recommend it.

A.M.

Gene Krupa Quartet

"The Driving Gene Krupa"

Home (When Shadows Fall): Out Of Nowhere: Jumpin' At The Woodsides: China Boy.

(H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8557—8s. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.)

"Gene is the kind of an institution who no longer needs to advertise through extensive or literal drum-beating," writes Leonard Feather in the sleeve note. "On this EP he is content to present . . . the quartet format . . . without any undue personal preponderance." The funny thing is that I can hear Gene soloing on three of the tracks, one of which, *China Boy*, is devoted almost entirely to drumming. I suppose it depends on what you mean by "undue personal preponderance". Actually I would prefer to hear Krupa's hide-walloping than the hiccupping tenor of Eddie Shu, who plays in such an obnoxious manner at the drop of a stick. *Home* is the best track, Shu playing clarinet most of the time and Gene swishing the brushes quietly across his side-drum head. The regrettable aspect of the record, though, is the relegation of the best jazz musician on the date, pianist Dave McKenna, to a very minor role. Whenever Dave gets a chance to solo he shows that he can play firm, two-handed piano with the able support of Wendell Marshall.

Apart from McKenna, and the accompaniments provided by Marshall, there is little or nothing here for the discerning jazz enthusiast. I have no doubt, though, that the record will sell extremely well.

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Alexis Korner's Blues Incorporated

"Blues From The Roundhouse"—Vol. 2
Sail On: National Defence Blues/Go Down Sunshine: Death Letter.
(Tempo 7 in. EP EXA102—0s. 9d. plus 3s. 2½d. P.T.)

As my colleague Charles Fox points out in his sleeve-note, it does seem strange that British artists can sing and play blues as convincingly as these musicians do. Nevertheless, derivative though this music inevitably must be, if you follow the advice given in the sleeve-note and listen without prejudice you certainly get the impression of a bunch of country blues men at work. Because I prefer Alexis Korner's voice to Cyril Davis's, and also because I rather like harmonica blues-playing, my favourite track is *Go Down Sunshine*, on which Davis accompanies Korner on this instrument. He does it very expertly, too. These performers really have addressed themselves to making a thorough study of Southern folk-blues. And in addition both they and we enjoy the advantage of good recording, an advantage few of the original blues artists had. As a result you don't have to spend half your time separating the music from the needle-hiss.

O.K.

George Lewis

"In Hi-Fi"
Struttin' With Some Barbecue: Salty Dod (V)/Move The Body Over (V)
(Vogue 7 in. EP EPV1252—0s. 9d. plus 3s. 2½d. P.T.)

"Sounds of New Orleans"
Sweet Sue: On A Coconut Island (V)/Limousine Blues: Swing A Lullaby.
(H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8540—0s. plus 2s. 7d. P.T.)

Here we have two aspects of George Lewis's music. The *Vogue* EP has been extracted from an LP (Vogue LAE12059), recorded in 1956, and exhibits the usual Lewis sound. The "fi" is not particularly "hi", either, despite the record's title. The *H.M.V.* EP is not only less expensive but is also better, both musically and from a recording point of view. It was recorded at a public concert, but has the applause edited out (Oh, if only this procedure had been adopted before!). The music is generally delightful. My favourite track is the beautifully restrained *Limousine Blues*, featuring a subtle and thrilling low-register solo by George Lewis, but the lullaby and the island song are wonderfully relaxed and have pleasing solo work from the trombonist (Bob Thomas) and the pianist (Alton Purnell). I don't care much, however, for Purnell's rough vocals. The only weak track is *Sweet Sue*, taken at much too fast a tempo.

The *Vogue* and *H.M.V.* sleeves each repeat the story of George Lewis's first professional date. It was on St. Joseph's Night, March 19th, with the Black Eagle band. On *Vogue* the year is given as 1916, on *H.M.V.* as 1914. Which is correct, I wonder?

O.K.

Terry Lightfoot's New Orleans Jazzmen

"Trad Again"
Egyptian Fantasy: Dipper Mouth Blues/Doctor Jazz: Tipperary.
(Columbia 7 in. EP SEG7976—0s. plus 2s. 7d. P.T.)

Dear me! Yet another *Tipperary* interpreted in "trad jazz" style. I'll bet the chaps who sang this song in 1914 never dreamed anything like this would happen to it! All four of these tunes are very derivative and the performances add nothing to what was said about them years ago. Bechet's beautiful tango theme, *Egyptian Fantasy* becomes a jerky strut, while the versions of *Dipper Mouth Blues* and the other tunes show a roughness that isn't necessary in classic-style jazz.

O.K.

The Mitchells

"Get Those Elephants Outa Here"
Get Those Elephants Outa Here: My One And Only Love: In The Wee Small Hours Of The Morning: Moten Swing/Monster Rally: Three Cheers For Brian: Fraternity.
(N.G.M. 12 in. LP CS038—25s. 9d. plus 3s. 4½d. P.T.)

Up to the time of writing my copy of the sleeve of this LP has not arrived. Nevertheless I presume this record was conceived by that indefatigable humourist, Leonard Feather.

Who else would have assembled a group containing three Mitchells with the Christian names Red, White(y) and Blue? While we're about it, may I suggest a future album featuring Art Pepper and Leroy Vinnegar, entitled "Condiments of the Seasonings"? Or perhaps a line-up containing Sonny Stitt, Sonny Clark, Sonny Terry and Sonny Criss . . . ?

What is surprising is that a group founded on such a ludicrous basis should perform in such a reasonable manner. Blue Mitchell is an adequate trumpeter who occasionally plays very well; Red Mitchell doubles on bass and piano; while Whitey shows that he is not far behind his brother's standard as a bassist. Frank Rehak, Pepper Adams and Frank Capp, playing trombone, baritone sax and drums respectively, complete the unit, while guest pianist André Previn pops up on *Get Those Elephants Outa Here* and *Blues For Brian*.

The star of the LP is Red Mitchell. Not only does he turn in his usual flawless performances on bass, but he outshines Previn as a jazz pianist during his two keyboard features, *Wee Small Hours* and *Fraternity*. Red's piano playing is not a gimmick, for he worked as pianist with Chubby Jackson's band a decade ago, and frequently took over on this instrument when he was with Gerry Mulligan's Quartet. The remainder of the group performs with skill rather than great inventiveness, although Rehak's smooth-toned solos have grace and continuity. *Monster Rally* features the Mitchell brothers in tandem on two basses, as does *Get Those Elephants Outa Here*, but the best tracks are those employing a more conventional approach.

A.M.

Charlie Mingus

"Mingus Ah Um"
Better Git It In Your Soul: Goodbye Pork Pie Hat: Boogie Stop Shuffle: Self-Portrait In Three Colours: Open Letter To Duke/Bird Calls: Fables Of Faubus: Pussy Cat Dues: Jelly Roll.
(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7352—27s. plus 8s. 7d. P.T.)

"Scenes In The City"
(Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8780—0s. plus 2s. 7d. P.T.)

After starting out with an initial distaste for Charlie Mingus's early compositions (*Pithecanthropus Erectus* seemed too naked to be art), I now find myself turning into a Mingus booster. He is doing more than just writing themes; he is conceiving compositions in terms both of texture and of the musicians who will perform them, doing the same kind of thing, in fact, although in a very different way, as Duke Ellington and Gil Evans. And the music of his group never degenerates into just a string of solos, the result of individual whim or caprice, but persists in remaining a genuinely collective thing, improvisation organised by Mingus rather than New Orleans jazz was dramatised by Jelly Roll Morton. I fling all these names about not merely because they seem apt, but also because they emphasise how Mingus—often looked upon as an iconoclast—really fits tightly inside the tradition of jazz composition.

Last September Alun Morgan praised two of Mingus's records: "The Clown" (London LTZ-K15164) and "East Coasting" (Parlophone PMC1092). This new one is by an almost identical group to that heard on those earlier LPs, with solos from Shafi Hadi (chiefly alto, but he also plays the laconic tenor solo in *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*); two trombonists, Jimmy Knepper (splendidly forthright) and Willie Dennis (he solos in *Open Letter To Duke*), and two tenor players, John Handy (*Better Git It In Your Soul*) and Booker Erwin (*Boogie Stop Shuffle* and *Jelly Roll*). A number of Mingus's compositions are dedicated to famous jazz musicians of the past and present: *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, for instance, a wistful, rather beautiful theme, refers to the late Lester Young; *Open Letter To Duke*, its theme a little like a Johnny Hodges' lament, is addressed to

Duke Ellington; the turbulent *Bird Calls*, ending with some curious chirruping noises, is in honour of the late Charlie Parker, while last of all comes *Jelly Roll*, a rather juvenile parody of old-time jazz, corny in a way that Jelly Roll Morton's music never was. No modern jazz record these days seems complete without its gospel track. *Better Git It In Your Soul* is an uncommonly good one, starting out in 6/8 time and displaying much rhythmic vivacity. *Boogie Stop Shuffle*, a train blues, has more of Duke Ellington in its voicing than the *Open Letter*; *Self-Portrait In Three Colours*, rich and slow, is fascinating for the way it interweaves the organ-like harmonies. The most attractive theme on the record, though, even a little Monkish at times, is *Fables of Faubus*. *Pussy Cat Dues* an everyday 12-bar blues, has some of Mingus's most adroit bass-playing and a pugnacious trombone solo from Jimmy Knepper. With the exception of the rather jejune *Jelly Roll*, in fact, this is a remarkably satisfying record, and a record, incidentally, that grows better every time you hear it.

Scenes in the City is, I suppose, an essay in jazz and poetry, although the poetry is of rather a prosaic kind and no attempt has been made to co-ordinate the two idioms. The narrative was written by an actor, Lonnie Elders, with the help of Langston Hughes, and is read here by another actor, Melvin Stewart. According to Stewart, this performance "examines a guy from Harlem and his relationship to jazz. It shows what jazz can mean to someone who's not basically a musician but who 'lives on that music' a lot". One might call it Everyman's tour of Harlem. The trouble is that the words are just not good enough; they stay close to the rhythm and vocabulary of ordinary American conversation (which is fair enough), but conversation which is neither sharp nor vivid. Some good music can be heard, though, played by a group very similar to that on "Mingus Ah Um". Especially notable are the trumpet solos of Clarence Shaw (he sounds very like Miles in the blues sequence) and the trombone work of Jimmy Knepper, a musician with a fine command of dynamics. C.F.

Jimmy Mundy

"Sounds Of Jazz"
Little Girl: Sugar Daddy/Everybody Loves My Baby: Mundy Flight.
(Fontana 7 in. EP TFE17232—0s. 3d. plus 3s. P.T.)

Jimmy Mundy will be best remembered from his arrangements for such band leaders as Earl Hines, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Count Basie and Illinois Jacquet. Here he leads two different, medium-sized groups made up of New York-based jazzmen, coaxing them through four pleasant, uncomplicated scores. Don Lamond's drums push things along on *Little Girl* and *Everybody Loves My Baby* and the remaining tracks are hall-marked by the fiery trumpet of Jimmy Nottingham. Budd Johnson plays fine tenor on *Mundy Flight* and bass clarinet elsewhere, while the incisive guitar playing throughout is the work of Kenny Burrell. Both bands sound well rehearsed and considerably larger than their actual numbers. It is unfortunate that Mundy was not allowed more space in which to expand his writing, for on this showing he still has plenty to offer jazz at a time when big bands and big band arrangers are in short supply.

Phil Napoleon's Emperors of Jazz

"At The Jazz Band Ball"
Sensation Raj: Sister Kate (V)/At The Jazz Band Ball: Clarinet Marmalade.
(Mercury 7 in. EP YEP9512—0s. plus 2s. 7d. P.T.)

Muskrat Ramble: I'll Never Be The Same/Fidgety Feet: Nobody's Sweetheart.
(Mercury 7 in. EP YEP9514—0s. plus 2s. 7d. P.T.)

I reviewed an EP by these groups in the December issue of THE GRAMOPHONE. I use the word "groups" deliberately, for, despite the sleeve-note, three different bands are involved.

The personnel given (and you have to wade into the note on YEP9514 to get even that) is correct only for *Muskrat Ramble*, *Jazz Band Ball* and *Clarinet Marmalade*. *Fidgety Feet* and *Nobody's Sweetheart* were made two days later, on April 12th, 1946, with Peanuts Hucko replacing Joe Dixon as clarinettist. The remaining tracks were recorded a month afterwards, when Vernon Brown replaced Lou McGarity (what fine trombonists both men are!) and Sal Franzella took over from Hucko. I prefer Franzella, as it happens, to the other, rather over-slick clarinettists: he has the ability to scurry in and out of the ensemble, always moving nimbly and using a sweeter tone than Hucko or Dixon.

Phil Napoleon has never played better, attacking most forthrightly and leading the band as a trumpeter should. I really enjoyed the hoary old *Sister Kate*, a track which features Tony Spargo playing the kazoo, and on which he is probably also responsible for the chirruping, whistling and crazy vocalising. Spargo, after fifty years in the business, is still the greatest white drummer as far as I'm concerned. Chuck Wayne plays the odd solo here and there, but as he uses an acoustic guitar he is not really out of place, although a band of this type scarcely needs a guitarist (unless it could be the late Eddie Lang). Frank Signorelli, Napoleon's old comrade from the days of the Original Memphis Five, does well enough at the piano. In general, as you can see, I thoroughly enjoyed these very professional Dixieland performances.

All the same, Mercury really should have got somebody who knows something about the subject to write the sleeve-notes. The first, by James Wynn, blithely asserts that Phil Napoleon started his career with Red Nichols, that he was later featured with the Memphis Five, then joined the Cotton Pickers, and that from 1925 to the early 1930s he alternated with Miff Mole as the leader of this group. The truth is that Napoleon was (with Mole) a founder-member of the Memphis Five, that the Cotton Pickers was simply Brunswick's name for the Memphis Five up to 1925; from that year onwards the name was used by Brunswick to cover several studio groups, most of which used Tommy Dorsey as trombonist and not Miff Mole. The name ceased to be used in 1929. O.K.

Phineas Newborn Trio

"Piano Portraits—No. 1"

Just In Time: Blues Theme For Left Hand Only/Chelsea Bridge: Star Eyes. (Columbia 7 in. EP/Mono SEG7992: ★ Stereo ESG7799-8s plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.)

After hearing his first LP (London LTZ-K15057) I came to the conclusion that Phineas Newborn's unparalleled technique had taken control of his natural common sense. Listening to him play, in the flesh, during the "Jazz From Carnegie Hall" tour in 1958, I found my opinion changed very little, although I must admit that the circumstances were such that Newborn could not have been expected to play at his best. With this EP—taken from a Roulette LP made last June—I must revise my thinking. Gone are most of those gargantuan runs of demi-semi-quavers; in their place is a more sober style, all the more attractive for its directness. Accompanied most suitably by John Simmons and the great Roy Haynes, Phineas treats us to an outstanding interpretation of Billy Strayhorn's *Chelsea Bridge*. This lovely tune makes a very good solo vehicle for pianists as Damian Robinson showed us some years ago, when he used it as a showcase on a Don Rendell EP (Tempo). *Blues Theme For Left Hand Only* is just that; it is not a new idea but Newborn's *tout-de-force* shows what a superlative technician he can be. This EP is apparently the first of a series, and I look forward to hearing the remaining tracks by this remarkable young man. A.M.

Kid Ory's Creole Jazz Band

In The Mood: Blues For Jimmy: Ain't Misbehavin': (V): Honeysuckle Rose/Pearl: Sister Kate (V): Tishomingo Blues. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1329—25s. 9d. plus 8s. 4½d. P.T.)

This LP presents the Ory band which toured Britain last October, except that Charles Oden is on bass and a guitarist, Frank Haggerty, has been added—although goodness knows why. There isn't much here that we haven't heard before, except the fact of a New Orleans band performing *In The Mood* without the precision of Glenn Miller's orchestra but with considerably more zest, and a set of crude and most unorthodox lyrics to *Sister Kate*, croaked by the old maestro himself. On *Honeysuckle Rose*, complete with riffs, the group swings like a band of the 1930s. *Ain't Misbehavin'*, taken at too hasty a tempo, proves that Alton Redd is no jazz singer. In fact I got my greatest satisfaction from listening to Red Allen's beautiful tone during the first half of his trumpet solo in *Pearl*. This tune appears elsewhere this month; I suppose we're now going to be submerged by all our trad bands having a go at it! Actually, it's a very good number, and Ory was certainly wise to omit the foolish lyrics. O.K.

like a mixture of Pete Brown and Johnny Hodges), Don Byas (even more romantic in style than Hawkins), Harry Carney (a nut-brown tone and audacious phrasing) and Hawkins himself. This time Johnny Guarnieri uses his "Fats" Waller style.

The odd man out on this LP is Willie Smith, not only because he plays the alto saxophone but also because his tracks fall slightly below the general level of the record. Both his performances were made in 1945, with accompaniments by Billy May, Murray McEachern, Arnold Ross, Les Paul, Ed Mihelich and Nick Fatso, a curiously eclectic little group. Arnold Ross is all right, taking some crisp piano solos, but Les Paul's guitar playing is much too melodramatic. *September In The Rain* finds Willie Smith virtually floating along, a replica of Johnny Hodges at his most languid. *You Oughta Be In Pictures* (an oddly prickly, over-busy tune for these particular musicians to have chosen) is much more typical of this alto-player's work. Even so, one has heard him playing in a far more inspired manner with both the old Jimmy Lunceford orchestra and the Harry James band.

C.F.

Shorty Rogers and his Giants

"Way Up There"

Blues Way Up There: Moten Swing: Blues Way Down There: Solarization/Pixieland: Wall Of Two Cities: Baklava Bridge: March Of The Martians. (London 12 in. LP LTZ-K15179—27s. plus 8s. 9½d. P.T.)

I am surprised that London have decided to issue this LP so late in the day. Made in 1955, at the sessions which produced "Martians Come Back" (London LTZ-K15056), it is something of an anachronism now. Many of the Hollywood recording gang are here, Jimmy Giuffre, Bud Shank and Shelly Manne amongst them. For some obscure contractual reasons Pete Jolly and Lou Levy appear on some sessions under their own names (there are five different groups heard here, incidentally), on others under the respective pseudonyms "Pete Cera" and "Earl Gray". Harry Edison partners Shorty on three tracks and takes part in the five trumpet *Pixieland*. In quite different ways, both Rogers and Edison are very limited soloists, but Harry's commanding tone makes up for a lack of invention. *Wall Of Two Cities* and *Baklava Bridge* are played by a nine-piece unit which uses the instrumentation of the Miles Davis "Capitol" band, but there the resemblance ends. It is unfortunate that on this LP Rogers has relied almost completely upon his own compositions. There is a sameness about the tunes which makes it difficult to remember individual numbers for even a short length of time, and Shorty should really try to get away from the limiting habit of composing around two or three notes.

On the credit side are all the rhythm sections (these comprise, collectively, Pete Jolly, Lou Levy, Barney Kessel, Ralph Pena, Leroy Vinnegar and Shelly Manne), the five-trumpet *Pixieland* (Rogers, Edison, Don Fagerquist and the Candoli brothers), and most of Jimmy Giuffre's solos. But the late issue of the LP merely focuses attention on the general tameness of jazz in Hollywood during the middle fifties.

A.M.

Bud Shank Quartet

"Holiday In Brazil"

Simpatica: Rio Rhapsody: Nocturno: Little Girl Blue: Charo In A/Mood Antigua: The Colour Of Her Hair: Lonely: I Didn't Know What Time It Was: Carioca Hill. (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12215—27s. 6d. plus 8s. 11½d. P.T.)

Just over a decade ago it was fashionable to attempt a marriage between jazz and the music of South America. Jazz soloists were added to Latin American orchestras, while bongo and conga drums made their appearances in the jazz rhythm section. Despite all this frantic activity it was left to guitarist Laurindo Almeida and the alto saxist and flautist Bud Shank to

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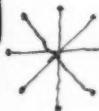


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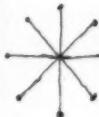
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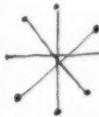
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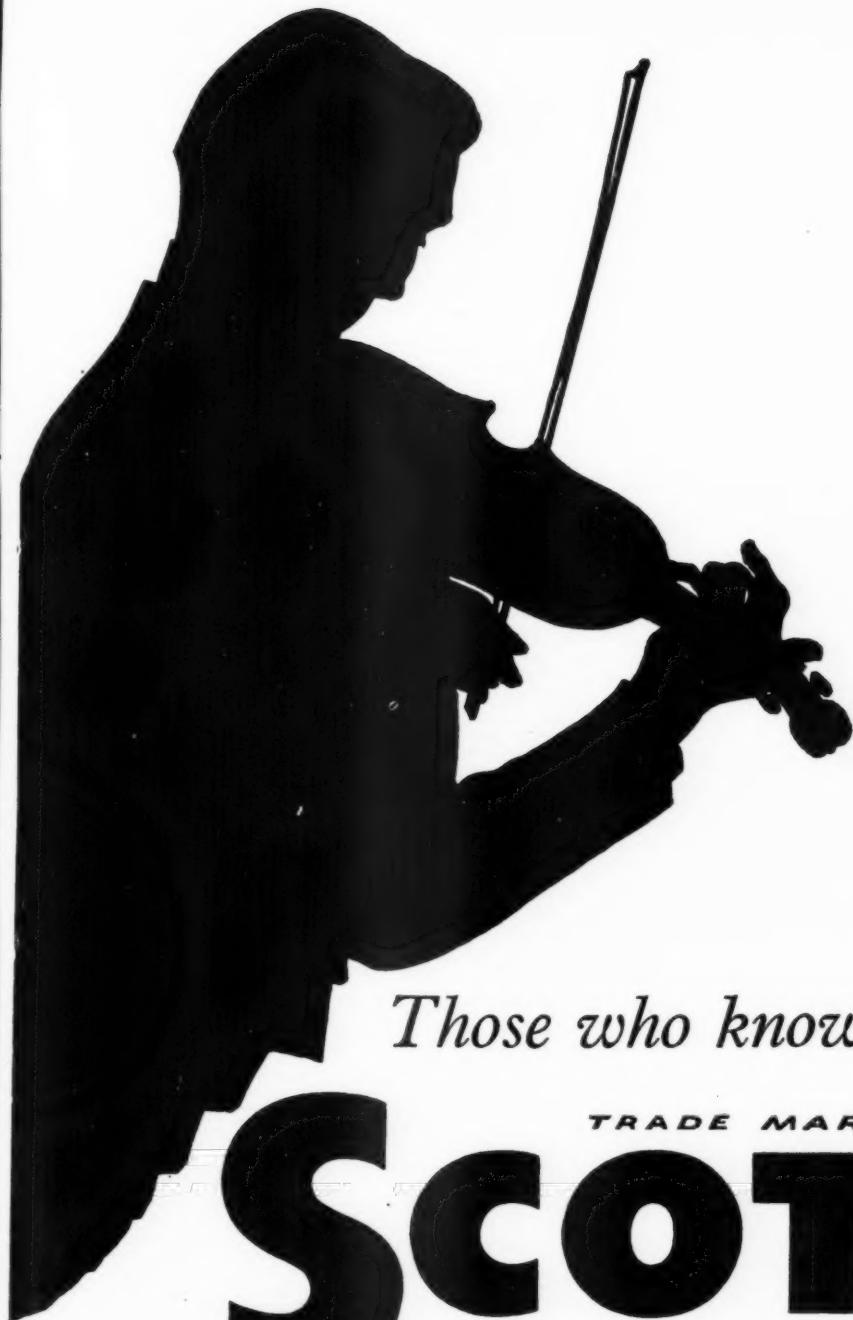
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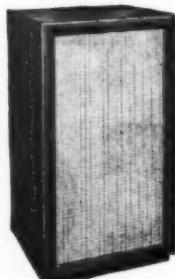
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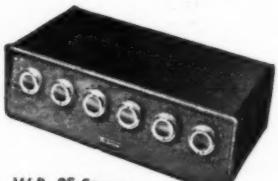
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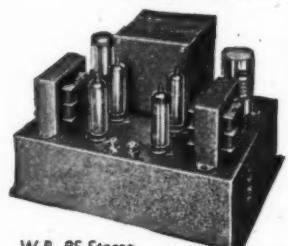
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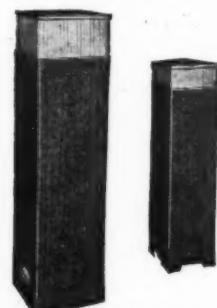
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make the best and least ephemeral contribution to the movement. *Vogue LAE12019* by Shank and Almeida, aided by bass and drums, is still the only north-and-south wedding of any importance. It is also a record which has weathered the test of time very well.

"*Holiday In Brazil*", its sequel, uses an identical format (although for contractual reasons Almeida cannot be listed on the sleeve as actually *playing*, merely as the arranger!). Shank has a remarkable talent for adapting his normal style to that of Almeida's for a chorus, and then shifting back into jazz in 4/4 for the next chorus. His flute playing (and I've always rated him as one of jazz's leading flautists) blends completely with the guitar, resulting in what sounds like authentic Brazilian folk music. Almeida needs no praise from me, for he is an acknowledged master, but I must mention the excellent team work of bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Chuck Flores; the latter adds considerably to *Mood Antigua* by making use of the tabla or Indian drums. It must be evident from my enthusiasm that I am wholeheartedly in favour of this LP. A.M.

Graham Stewart Seven

"Graham Stewart Plays King Oliver"
Canal Street Blues: Working Man Blues/Tears: Sweet Lovin' Man.

(Tempo 7 in. EP EXA91-9a. 9½d. plus 2s. 2½d. P.T.)

Four numbers from the repertoire of King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band are performed, for the most part, with care and understanding. *Canal Street Blues*, as it happens, is taken a bit too fast, and Ian McKerrow's spiky clarinet solo falls a long way behind that of the immortal Johnny Dodds. But the best and most sympathetic performance is of *Working Man Blues*, although the two other tracks are not far behind it. Alan Elsdon gives a creditable impersonation of the great Joe "King" Oliver, while the leader, Graham Stewart, happens to be infinitely superior as a trombonist to the rather pathetic Honoré Dutrey, whose playing on Oliver's original version of *Tears* was at times lamentable. The rhythm section, however, is a trifle wooden, and not enough is heard of the pianist, Alan Root. As a result, these performances lack the smooth, relaxed sound of the Oliver band, but, considering the high peak of perfection at which they aim, these British musicians give a very good account of themselves.

I cannot say much in favour of the sleeve-note, which goes crazy when it tries to give the original recording dates for three of the numbers. The dates shown refer only to copyright on the compositions; they are not the dates of recording.

O.K.

Art Tatum

"Art Tatum No. 1"

Tea For Two: Sophisticated Lady/Someone To Watch Over Me: Tiger Rag.

(Fantasy 7 in. EP TFE17235-9a. 3d. plus 2s. P.T.)

If it does nothing else, at least this unusual compilation provides interest for the keen discographer. All the tracks except *Someone To Watch Over Me* were recorded in New York on March 21st, 1933, for the American Brunswick Company, at the instigation of John Hammond and Spike Hughes. (Hughes refers to the discovery of Tatum and his subsequent recordings for Brunswick in the second part of his autobiography.) They are, in fact, Tatum's first solo recordings and were released here before the war on Brunswick, together with the fourth title, *St. Louis Blues*. In November, 1954, our Columbia Company put out an EP (since deleted) comprising *St. Louis*, *Tea For Two*, *Tiger Rag* and *Sophisticated Lady*. The last three titles then appeared in America on an LP issued by Epic (a subsidiary of American Columbia), and it is presumably from this Epic LP that Philips have taken the titles for issue here. So the British collector has now been

offered three titles from Art's first session on three different labels. The fourth track (and why Philips decided against using *St. Louis Blues* is a question I can't answer) comes from a Gene Norman concert held in Los Angeles during May, 1949. (A hint of applause is discernible at the very beginning of the performance.) This track is currently available on *Vogue LDE081*, which also contains the remaining titles Tatum played at the concert, although *Someone To Watch Over Me* contains an introduction which is not present on the *Vogue* LP.

Musically the 1933 tracks are the most interesting, for they show that Tatum, even at the age of twenty-two, was a complete master of his instrument. The ascending modulations in *Tea For Two* were still to come, but there are plenty of points of similarity between these original versions and later recordings of the same tunes.

A.M.

Sarah Vaughan

"No Count Sarah"
Smoke Gets In Your Eyes: Doodlin': Darn That Dream: Just One Of Those Things: Moonlight In Vermont: No Count Blues: Check To Check: Stardust: Missing You.

(Mercury 12 in. LP MMC14021-25s. 9d. plus 2s. 4½d. P.T.)

"Sarah Vaughan Sings George Gershwin"

Vol. 1

The Man I Love: Someone To Watch Over Me: I'll Build A Stairway To Paradise: Isn't It A Pity: Bidin' My Time/Of Thee I Sing: How Long Has This Been Going On: I've Got A Crush On You: Lorelei: My One And Only.

(Mercury 12 in. LP ★stereo CMS18011-25s. 9d. plus 2s. 4½d. P.T.)

Vol. 2

A Foggy Day: Aren't You Kinda Glad We Did: They All Laughed: Looking For A Boy: My Man's Gone Now/He Loves And She Loves: Do It Again: Let's Call The Whole Thing Off: Things Are Looking Up: Love Walked In: I Won't Say I Will, But I Won't Say I Won't.

(Mercury 12 in. LP ★stereo CMS18012-25s. 9d. plus 2s. 4½d. P.T.)

"Sarah With Feeling"

Broken-Hearted Melody: Misty: The Midnight Sun: Never Sets: Gone With The Wind.

(Mercury 7 in. EP ZEP10041-9s. 3d. plus 2s. 0½d. P.T.)

I'm reviewing these records only a few days after hearing Sarah Vaughan in the flesh at the Royal Festival Hall. Yet even the fact that Miss Vaughan is decidedly more dynamic when seen as well as heard cannot dissuade me from ranking "No Count Sarah" among this singer's finest recordings. The LP was given this title because Miss Vaughan is accompanied on every track except one (*Darn that Dream*, with a Budd Johnson group) by the entire Count Basie orchestra, but with Basie's place at the piano taken by the singer's regular accompanist, Ronnell Bright. It's both a stirring and satisfying partnership. Certainly the record begins dramatically enough, Sarah Vaughan's voice lunging up to the opening word of *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* (Observe, too, the Billie Holiday cadence with which she concludes this track.) *Doodlin'*—the casual Horace Silver tune—uses the set of lyrics which Jon Hendricks devised for the Dave Lambert Singers; it finds Miss Vaughan hitting the high notes with an attack and discipline that reminds one of Annie Ross. The band strides out nicely behind the singer in *Just One Of Those Things*, but the most relaxed performance of all occurs during the five-minute *No Count Blues*, where the singer uses her voice instrumentally. The Basie musicians perform with gusto and power, the soloists including Frank Foster, Frank Wess (on flute) and—a surprise, this—Seldon Powell, who deputised for Billy Mitchell on one session and can be heard in *Stardust*. The arrangements are the work of Johnny Mandel, Ernie Wilkins, Thad Jones, Frank Foster and Frank Wess.

The Gershwin albums present stereo versions of two LPs which were issued in monophonic form a couple of years ago, when Mercury was being handled over here by the Pye-Nixa group. (Alun Morgan reviewed the mono releases in the January, 1958, issue of THE

GRAMOPHONE.) These stereo discs contain exactly the same material, except that *Summer-time* has been omitted from Volume 1. The accompaniments, by Hal Mooney's orchestra, deploy strings expansively; the stereo recording, alas, is not completely satisfactory, for not only do the strings sound much too brittle, but occasionally they succeed in swamping the singer. Miss Vaughan sounds far too vibrant and intense on *The Man I Love* and her performance of *Isn't It A Pity* is distinctly cloying, not a patch on Mitzi Gaynor's (reviewed in December). The second volume is rather better, both from the standpoint of recording and interpretation. On the whole, though, these LPs display neither Miss Vaughan nor Mr. Gershwin at their most becoming. The tracks on the EP have all been extracted from "Vaughan and Violins" (Mercury MMC14011, reviewed in October, 1959), an LP made in Paris during 1958. Quincy Jones wrote the arrangements and Zoot Sims plays a couple of tenor solos; nevertheless, the massive string section seems to lull Miss Vaughan into a passive mood. The liveliest performance is of Errol Garner's tune, *Misty*.

C.F.

The Vernon Boys

Have I Told You Lately That I Love You?: Glory Land: Ole Miss: Everything's Wrong, Ain't Nothing Right (V): Black Mountain Blues: Tipperary/There's Yes, Yes In Your Eyes: Young Woman's Blues (V): Ma Says, Pa Says: Over The Waves: Take Me For A Buggy Ride (V): Keep The Home Fires Burning.

(Top Rank 12 in. LP 35-032-26s. 4½d. plus 2s. 7½d. P.T.)

For the second time this month—*Tipperary*; for the third time—*Over The Waves* (for what else is *Acker's Away*?). No matter; the band plays with a more mellow sound than many of its contemporaries in the "trad" field. I didn't like the banjo solo in *Keep The Home Fires Burning*; no attempt was made to play either the melody or variations upon it. There is not much sense of relaxation in this group either, but the general standard of solo work is quite high, if not exactly thrilling. Lynn Trent, the vocalist, avers in the sleeve-note that she did not learn to sing blues by listening to Bessie Smith records. All right, I'll believe that, especially after hearing her at work. But why offer two Bessie Smith numbers out of the three she does sing? Surely it invites comparison.

O.K.

George Williams and his Orchestra

"Swing Classics In Hi-Fi"

Marie: Flying Home: Boogierockawooie: Back Bay Shuffle: Breakin' In A Pair Of Shoes: Empty Jug/Drum Boogie: One For My Baby: Pompton Turnpike: The Breeze And I: Take The "A" Train: Endsville.

(London 12 in. LP ★stereo SAH-T6052, mono LTZ-15174-27s. plus 2s. 9½d. P.T.)

George Williams wrote orchestrations for many big bands of the 1930s and 1940s, the "swing era", including those of Jimmy Lunceford, Lionel Hampton, Gene Krupa and Harry James. On this LP he has taken a set of well-known tunes from those days (plus three "originals" of his own) and scored them in the Benny Goodman manner (well, the Fletcher Henderson manner, really), reeds alternating with brass in a call-and-response pattern that should have been very effective in stereo. So it would, too, if only a proper balance had existed between the two groups of instruments; as it is, the brasses are much, much louder than the reeds. The tuba, however, sounds good in stereo, although when it is used to play short, staccato notes in concert with the trumpets the result is section work that sounds far too brusque. These tracks are the product of three separate sessions, the band on each occasion comprising well-known studio musicians. Art Farmer blows a nicely poised trumpet solo in *Empty Jug* (a thinly disguised *Little Brown Jug*) and partners Joe Newman on *The Breeze And I*. Perhaps the best track—certainly the most relaxed—is *Flying Home*, which includes a crisp piano solo by Hank

Jones. This is a pleasant LP, in fact, with reasonably good solo work and neat but not very original scoring.

C.F.

IN BRIEF

Tony Crombie and his Men. "Atmosphere". *St. James Infirmary: Stompin' At The Savoy/Ninth Man: I'll Close My Eyes* (Columbia 7 in. EP ★stereo ESG7753, mono SEG7915—8s, plus 2s, 7d. P.T.).

These four tracks come off an LP, Columbia 33SX1119 (reviewed by Alan Morgan in January, 1959)—an LP, incidentally, that has just been issued in stereo form as SCX3262. It contains some very invigorating jazz. *Stompin' At The Savoy*, by a trio, has Tony Crombie at the piano, playing in a very personal but chatty way. The other tracks are by an eight-piece band (with Crombie back behind the drums) and include sober but shapely solos from Tommy Whittle (tenor sax) and Tubby Hayes (baritone sax).

C.F.

Firehouse Five Plus Two. "The Firehouse Five Plus Two Go To Sea".

By The Beautiful Sea: When My Dreamboat Comes Home/Minnin' The Mermaid: Over The Waves (Good Time Jazz 7 in. EP EPG1261—9s, 9d, plus 3s, 2d. P.T.) *People Aleep In The Deep/ A Sailor In The Moonlight: On The Good Ship Lollipop* (Good Time Jazz 7 in. EP EPG1262—9s, 9d, plus 3s, 2d. P.T.) *She Was Just A Sailor's Sweetheart: Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea/Red Sails In The Sunset: Anchors Aweigh* (Good Time Jazz 7 in. EP EPG1263—9s, 9d, plus 3s, 2d. P.T.).

This represents a "breakdown" of the Good Time Jazz LP (LAG12150) which I reviewed in December, 1958. It's a case of when you've heard one then you've heard the lot, but if you just want some lively music to dance to, these records take a lot of beating.

O.K.

Tyree Glenn With Strings. "Try A Little Tenderness". *I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face: It's The Talk Of The Town: How Long Has This Been Going On?: It's Easy To Remember: The Song Is You: As Time Goes By/Lover Man: That's All: When I Fall In Love: Crazy She Calls Me: I Got It Bad: Try A Little Tenderness* (Columbia 12 in. LP ★stereo SCX3301; Mono 33SX1216—25s. 9d, plus 8s, 4d. P.T.).

The fact that Tyree Glenn once replaced Tricky Sam Nanton as the trombonist in Duke Ellington's orchestra is betrayed by his bizarre use of the mute. But that is about the only connection this LP has with jazz. For the most part, this is suave, beautifully controlled playing that sticks to the melodies and is underlined by lush arrangements. It's odd to find that Don Redman, once a pioneer of bold orchestral writing, scored four of these tracks.

C.F.

Eydie Gorme. "On Stage". *Taking A Chance On Love: Just One Of Those Things: You Turned The Tables On Me: But Not For Me: Get Out Of Town: All Right, Okay, You Win/I Got Lost In His Arms: Better Luck Next Time: I'm In Luck: I'm Shooting High: You've Getting To Be A Habit With Me: One For My Baby*. (H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1323—25s. 9d, plus 8s, 4d. P.T.).

Recorded in the Open-air Convention Centre in Las Vegas, this LP is less consistent than the last. Eydie Gorme's release ("Love Is A Season", H.M.V. CLP1200, reviewed last December). Some of the chosen tempos are not quite right (I should have preferred *But Not For Me* to sound slightly brighter, for instance), but there are enough good tracks to warrant my recommending the album. As the above details show, there are some fine songs to be heard, including a version of that neglected Rodgers and Hart gem, *Better Luck Next Time*. Eydie sings with tremendous confidence most of the time and even manages an imitation of Joe Williams' phrasing on *All Right, Okay, You Win*. Don Costa's arrangements are imaginative and the orchestra is a successful blend of brasses, reeds, strings and rhythm. There are some brief muted trumpet solos by the ex-Herman trumpeter, Charlie Walp, and a few vibes interludes from Red Norvo.

A.M.

John LaSalle Quartet. "Jumpin' At The Left Bank". *Welcome To The Left Bank: Let There Be Love: I'll Never Smile Again: Tired Of Love: Jus' Sick Blues: Out Of This World/Just In Time: Clementine: Jumpin' At The Left Bank: The Swing Song: Deep In The Do: Everybody Loves My Baby* (Capitol 12 in. LP ★stereo ST1176; Mono T1176—24s. 9d, plus 7s, 11d. P.T.).

The John LaSalle Quartet, a vocal group (three boys and a girl), has worked at New York's Left Bank place. It is one of the most satisfying units of its type, more interesting (and, I'm certain, more jazz-oriented) than those glib purveyors, the Hi-Lo's. Using a girl to sing lead and hit the high notes certainly seems a much more satisfactory formula than having a male vocalist cavoring around *faisetto*. Marlene Ver Planck is excellent in every way, leading the quartet with the fire and accuracy of Annie Ross. The programme, suitably varied, includes a genuinely funny adaptation of *Clementine*. The medium-sized supporting band is conducted by the ex-Dorsey arranger, Billy Ver Planck, who wrote *Jus' Sick Blues* (recorded previously by Aaron Sachs on *Esquire*). The quartet sings this jazz tune in seat fashion and there is a good tenor solo from an uncredited musician who sounds like Seldon Powell. Jazz lovers with a penchant for vocal groups should make a point of hearing the LaSalle Quartet, for its overall effect recalls the Meltones, who sang with Artie Shaw fourteen years ago.

A.M.

STYLI

By P. WILSON, M.A.

Size of Styli

A good deal of confusion seems to exist about the most satisfactory dimensions of styli for different types of record. Why, for example, should some manufacturers specify styli with tip radius of 0.0005 in. (4 mil) for stereo pickups, whilst others specify a tip radius of 0.00075 in. (4 mil)? What will be the difference in actual playing conditions between the one and the other? Can styli of either of these dimensions be used for ordinary LPs for which the standard size is 0.001 in. (1 mil)? And, finally, what is the optimum size for "coarse groove" (78 r.p.m.) records?

Let us take the questions in reverse order and note for a start that the governing factor in all cases is the shape and dimensions of the cross-section of the groove.

Now before about 1933 no attempt seems to have been made (or at any rate came to anything) to standardise groove shapes. H.M.V. had one shape (rather shallow and broad) whilst Columbia had an entirely different one. Each recording engineer had his own ideas on the best shape of cutting tool.

After the amalgamation of H.M.V. and Columbia a greater measure of consistency was secured and by 1948 a standardised groove contour of 0.001 in. radius at the bottom, a depth of 0.0026 in. and a surface width of 0.006 in. had been accepted by nearly all recording companies. (There is an error in Fig 8 on page 66 of *The Gramophone Handbook* in this connection. The radius is there printed as 0.002 in.—obviously too large).

Unfortunately, however, the bottom radius in different pressings was subject to variation by reason of two practical difficulties and in pre-1933 records these were of much greater moment than they became later. These were, first, the liability for "creeping" in the electrolytic deposit in the making of "masters" and "stampers"; and second, the wear of the protuberances on the stampers after a number of pressings had been made. Both of these difficulties led to a larger and more irregular bottom radius (and a shallower groove) than that specified. In practical playing conditions, therefore, a rather larger stylus radius than the academic specification is desirable. So whilst for the best post-war 78 r.p.m. recordings a 0.0025 in. stylus is usually specified, earlier records may respond better to a stylus radius of 0.003 in. or even (usually in pre-electrics) to 0.004 in. radius.

At this point it is necessary, perhaps, to draw attention to two competing disabilities:

1. If the stylus radius is too small there is a risk of "bottoming", that is, of the stylus rubbing on the bottom of the groove where (owing to creeping and stamper wear previously referred to) the groove is rougher than on the walls, and where dust and debris may accumulate. Surface noise will then be much increased.

2. If the stylus radius is over-large, the "tracing distortion" due to "pinch effect" will be increased.

There will also be different effects on pickup performance, due to possible differences in "tip mass" and in area of contact of stylus with groove (leading to a different value of record compliance). These were not so important for 78 r.p.m. records but have become vital for LPs and *a fortiori* for stereo discs.

Coarse Groove Records

The counsel of perfection for playing 78 r.p.m. discs is therefore to have two or three

different sizes of styli—4 mil for ancient records, 3 mil for later acoustical and early electrics, and 2 1/2 mil for modern discs. As an alternative some will prefer to retain a pickup which will take fibre or thorn needles, which will rapidly accommodate themselves to particular groove shapes, even though these may give rise to a certain amount of treble attenuation; this can, if desired, be compensated in the amplifier control unit, and in any case I think it can probably be demonstrated that the proportionate attenuation of indiscriminate and scattered treble frequencies is greater than that of musical notes, so that an improvement of signal/noise ratio is thereby secured.

LP Standards

By the time (1949/50) that LPs came into the picture the idea of standardised groove contours had been generally accepted and a stylus tip radius of 0.001 in. became the rule. At first the problems I have referred to about record production somewhat obscured the advantages, but by 1954/55 a large measure of consistency seems to have been achieved and some pickup manufacturers (e.g., Fairchild) reduced the stylus tip size to 1/2 mil, so as to reduce tracing distortion. In this they were conspicuously successful, though they found that even though the tip mass had been kept the same, the H.F. resonance of the cartridge had been lowered by nearly half an octave. This effect was eventually found to be due to the alteration of record material compliance by the concentration of the playing weight over a smaller area of contact. However, by this time the technique of pickup manufacture had so improved that despite this unforeseen effect the H.F. resonance could still be kept sufficiently high as not to outweigh the advantage of lower tracing distortion.

For LP records, therefore, we may say that a tip radius of 1 mil is satisfactory, whilst even 1/2 mil may be used with advantage if the design of cartridge is such that the H.F. resonance with that tip radius is over 15 kc/s.

Styli for Stereo

For stereo discs the situation is much the same, only more so! From the start a standard groove contour was agreed, but the conditions of cutting and pressing and other manufacturing techniques are much more difficult. There have been many, far too many, examples of poor groove shape. Though the position has improved of late it still remains true that some of the groove contours are atrocious.

We in Britain seem to be much better off in this respect than our confrères abroad. My friend Cecil Watts has been making a special study of the problem recently, securing samples of discs, bought in the open market, from America and the Continent as well as from this country. It does not need much examination of these samples to become convinced that the complications of stereo have demanded, still demand, and will continue to demand, more and more meticulous attention on the part of record makers to groove accuracy in the final product. The problem is one of those impossible things that takes much time and skill and effort to solve. But I am sure that it can be solved, and, indeed, some of the records I have will prove it.

With an inferior pressing a 1/2 mil stylus will occasionally bottom and not only will an increase of noise result but also a peculiar form of distortion. These will disappear if a good cartridge with a 1/2 mil stylus is used, though

the tracing distortion over the good parts of the record may be thereby increased. Perhaps that is why $\frac{1}{2}$ mil stylus have virtually disappeared, I am told, from the American market. For the best pressings I still prefer my British Decca with its $\frac{1}{2}$ mil stylus. But for many records my American Shure gives a more tolerable account of itself; this has a $\frac{1}{2}$ mil stylus and a particularly smooth and comfortable sort of response, both on stereo and on mono discs. The same is true of my American Grado whose string tone is especially good.

So, whilst the prescribed standard size of stylus for stereo remains at $\frac{1}{2}$ mil, defects in record manufacture has forced the adoption of the $\frac{1}{2}$ mil size, with its higher liability to tracing distortion. A pity, maybe; but "the best is often the enemy of the good", and the situation will persist so long as the record makers let it.

Tolerances

What about tolerances? What guarantee have you that if you try to buy a $\frac{1}{2}$ mil stylus you will get it? None at all. I looked the other day at the shadowgraph of one of the largest stylus suppliers in the country. On it were marked the contour limits for each particular nominal size and every stylus sold has its shape projected on to the screen and must come within the prescribed limits before it is passed. Here are these prescribed limits:

1 mil: between 0.0008 in. and 0.001 in.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ mil: between 0.00065 in. and 0.0008 in.

$\frac{1}{2}$ mil: between 0.00045 in. and 0.00065 in.

I am told that the tendency of stylus makers is for the upper limits to be more nearly approached—that is, that a $\frac{1}{2}$ mil stylus is more likely to be 0.00065 in. than 0.00045 in. radius.

Life of Stylus

Other things being equal, the effective life of a stylus of larger radius will be greater than that of a smaller radius. As soon as we get down to playing weights under 2 grams this will hardly be noticeable; but it is noticeable at the usual "domestic" playing weight of 6 grams or so. Incidentally, a $\frac{1}{2}$ mil stylus should not be used at such a large playing weight. Its life will be too short; indeed, a sapphire would only last for a few hours.

Though one cannot dogmatise or be precise on this subject of wear, since so very much depends on playing conditions, I still adhere to my suggestion that in normal domestic conditions the safe life of a 1 mil sapphire stylus at a playing weight of 6-7 grams is 25 hours; whilst that for a $\frac{1}{2}$ mil at a playing weight of 5 grams is a little less—say 20 hours. These figures can be increased by a factor of at least 3 if the records and stylus are kept clean and special care is taken in playing. For a diamond stylus of good make they may be increased by a factor of not less than 40 times.

Diamond Stylus

This brings me to a question that many readers have asked in correspondence during the past few months. Why have diamond stylus suddenly become cheaper and are they as satisfactory as they used to be? One can now buy a diamond stylus for a crystal cartridge for no more than 28s. (which compares well with a sapphire price of 7s. 6d.) whereas £4 or £5 used to be demanded.

The answer is twofold. First, the supply of diamond "chips" has improved, particularly from Germany, I understand; and secondly, a less expensive form of fabrication has been introduced by lapidaries. But, and there is a very important qualification, this form of fabrication has increased the mass of the stylus assembly very considerably, and is therefore only suitable for cartridges where a com-

paratively high value of tip mass is permissible. In these cases, the diamond chip is mounted in a cylindrical steel shank and the final mass of stylus and shank may be as much as 3 milligrams, perhaps more. This is clearly of no use for a stereo pickup of the most advanced type which aims at a tip mass of under 1 milligram (including the effective mass of armature or cantilever as well as that of the stylus itself). In such a case a "naked" diamond must be used; this usually has a square cut shank, directly cemented to the cantilever. Its mass,

as fabricated, is $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of a milligram or less, and obviously a specially fine technique is required to fix it properly.

These low-mass diamond stylus therefore remain expensive: £5 (including P.T.) is not too much to pay, in view of the labour cost involved.

It should be noted also that the steel-shank technique cannot be used for many magnetic cartridges where it would vitiate the magnetic circuit. In these cases a more expensive form of mounting is essential.

TECHNICAL TALK

Mullard Time-Multiplex Stereo

I have just come from a demonstration of this latest development of FM Broadcasting and have been amazed by its comparative simplicity and, so far as one could judge, complete effectiveness. I say "so far as one could judge" only because the broadcasting link was on a small scale and one could not therefore do more than guess what the effect of outside interference would be in large-scale, high-powered transmission.

The problem to be solved is, of course, to arrange for a single FM channel to transmit two different signals simultaneously but in such a way that:

1. the signals do not interfere with each other, yet each must cover the full range of musical frequencies;
2. the total bandwidth must be within the limits prescribed for a single broadcast channel;
3. the transmission should be capable of reception either by an ordinary radio receiver as a monophonic transmission or by a stereo receiver as a stereo transmission (i.e. it should be "compatible");
4. the signal/noise ratio should be acceptable;
5. the cost to the listener of adding this extra facility should be reasonable.

The Mullard system, which has been devised by Mr. G. D. Browne, satisfies all these conditions. It is based on the well-known principle that if an audio signal is interrupted at sufficiently high frequency the ear will not notice any difference. This principle has been used for many years for transmitting a number of signals simultaneously along the P.O. telephone lines and it is known that the frequency of interruption must be not less than twice that of the highest frequency to be transmitted. In the present application the highest frequency may be taken to be 15 kc/s and the interruption frequency has been chosen to be 32.5 kc/s.

What happens in the transmission is that the two audio signals are each "interrupted" at that frequency and are therefore each represented by a series of pulses of varying amplitude. These pulses are then interlaced—A, B; A, B; A, B and so on—in a coding device and a synchronising signal is added, much in the same way as in TV transmission. At the receiving end a simple de-coder is added to the receiver to reverse the process, sorting out the interlaced pulses and directing them to the left or right amplifiers. The synchronising pulses are needed, of course, to trigger the de-coder and keep the function in step.

This is the simplest, and perhaps the most logical, system I have seen, whether here or in America, to achieve the desired object. And it works! Moreover, a bandwidth of not more than 80 kc/s is needed for the full transmission up to 15 kc/s audio. I feel, therefore, that the day of stereo broadcasting has been brought appreciably nearer.

Optimum Playing Conditions Again

Since my January article I have received quite a number of interesting letters from readers, criticising or elaborating my conclusions. I shall have to leave the examination of the many points to a further, rather involved article. In the meantime, I shall try to reply to each writer separately, though it is not easy to find the requisite time since for a complete reply some tricky mathematical analysis may be involved. I do want to say two things in advance, however. First, the blank disc method of finding a dynamic balance can be effectively used even though the friction of a groove may be somewhat greater than that of a blank disc; and secondly, that to strive after a rigid formula for track alignment is chasing a will-o'-the-wisp since practical conditions of setting up are too coarse; one is bound to be left with residual errors, but these, I think, can be dealt with in another way. Moreover, it may be better in practice to compromise on the setting for tracking error in order to secure a better condition for side pressure.

[Since the above was written I have received from Mr. H. J. F. Crabbe, who devised the side-pressure balancing arrangement described last month, an advance copy of an article he has written for the *Wireless World*. This gives a quantitative analysis of the effects involved and is an admirable basis for further exploration.]

Double Play Tape

During the past 6 months or so we have been making some extensive tests of various types and makes of tape—PVC and Polystyrene; British, American and German. These have included frequency response measurements, signal/noise tests, consistency tests (i.e. over a length of reel), and print-through tests. I shall have more to say about the details of these tests at a later date. At this stage I just want to give some preliminary conclusions and a general warning.

For consistency we found the special M.S.S. long-play tape and the E.M.I. and Scotch Boy Professional standard tape to be A1.

The B.A.S.F. standard tape has given a higher level of response at 10 kc/s compared with that at 1 kc/s than any other that we have so far tested, and the signal/noise ratio is good too.

All brands of Double Play tape, without exception, have given excessive print-through, and I strongly advise that this type be not used for serious recording work. It should be reserved for dictation or other ephemeral entertainment.

We started off our print-through tests optimistically. We took samples of the various brands and recorded sharp pips on them at 1-second intervals. We then stored the spools away for 6 months in good, but not optimum, storage conditions: that is, we kept them on a shelf, away from magnets, fluorescent tubes and the like, at a reasonable room temperature.

We expected to find that after about 6 months we should be able to trace print-through images of the one-second pips at intervening intervals on each tape. As I have said, we were too optimistic. The images were so pronounced that they were almost indistinguishable by ear from the originals. All brands exhibited this defect.

We then tried shorter intervals of storage and eventually found that on all brands the images were discernible within 48 hours. A piano forte recording from F.M. radio was next tried and we found that its limit of usefulness was not more than 12 hours.

Hence my conclusion: Don't use Double-Play tape for serious recording.

The special Long Play Polyester M.S.S. tape, and indeed all the LP tapes we have tried, PVC and Polyester, have proved to be remarkably free from print-through trouble. Why there should be this fantastic difference

between Long Play and Double Play I don't know. Perhaps the time factor is exponential rather than linear. If that were so it would be desirable to transfer even from Long Play to Standard tape within a few weeks.

There is no doubt that Long Play tape is of advantage to avoid interruption in recording, though that advantage can be gained equally well, and perhaps even better, by using 8½-in. spools instead of 7½ in.

Correction

It has been pointed out to me that there was an ambiguity in one of the sentences of my report on the S.M.E. arm in our January issue. It occurs in the penultimate paragraph on p. 394. What I should have said was: "The Tannoy is *at its best* . . . The two little words in italics were omitted!

P.W.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Heathkit "Cotswold" Loudspeaker. Price (kit): £19 18s. 6d. Daystrom Ltd., Gloucester.

Makers' Specification:

Size: 26 in. by 23 in. by 16½ in. plus 7 in. legs.

Cabinet: 12 mm. veneered ply lined with ½ in. Celotex and lagged. Tygan fabric.

Power Rating: 25 watts.

Frequency Range: 30-20,000 c/s.

Nominal Impedance: 15 ohms.

Speaker Units:

Bass: (By Fane Acoustics). 12 in. Curvilinear cone. 2 in. coil. 12,000 gauss. 27/30 c/s resonance in free air cross-over at 1 kc/s (½ section).

Middle: (By Goodmans) 8 in. by 5 in. elliptical. ½ in. coil. 10,500 gauss. Range, 750-6,000 c/s.

Treble: (By Fane Acoustics). 2 in. pressure unit with aluminium cone. ½ in. coil 17,000 gauss. Range, 5 to 20 kc/s. Capacitor coupling to mid-range.

I first heard this speaker system at the Harrogate Audio Fair and specially commented in my report on the excellent impression it made on me.

I have now had two samples in Oxford, both at home and in our test lab., for nearly a couple of months and have made extensive tests and comparisons with other speakers.

My earlier impressions have been fully confirmed. It is an attractive and comfortable speaker system of long range: which means that it is easy to listen to and never obscures any faults upon the ear. By careful and intense listening one could detect a little coloration at the cross-over frequencies between the bass and mid-range speaker units (largely, I fancy, because the bass range extended well above 1,000 c/s and indeed audibly up to 2,000 c/s) and again higher in the scale where the treble pressure unit began to function strongly. But I want to stress, in making this comment, that one had to listen for this and

even so it could be well controlled by judicious use of the two variable attenuators that are incorporated. The setting we found the most satisfactory was to have the treble full on with the middle slightly attenuated, but this will no doubt differ with the room conditions to some extent.

In our technical examination, we noted that the cabinet is completely closed and filled with damping material (actually small chunks of cellulose wadding). The free air resonance of the bass unit (which we measured to be 32 c/s, though this will no doubt go lower with use) is therefore transformed in the loaded condition to a frequency of about 50 c/s. In these circumstances the bass frequencies which begin to tail off at 120 c/s (a very happy point for this to happen, since it eliminates chestiness in male voices!) is given a lift again up to a flat peak round about 50 c/s, and there is quite a useful response even at 30-40 c/s.

We noted with approval, too, that the mid-range unit is enclosed in a separate box, giving it a fair insulation from interference by the bass unit. This means, of course, that inter-modulation between the two is largely avoided.

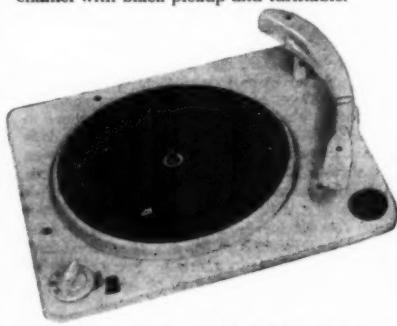
All in all, we regard this as a distinctly successful combination and really marvellous value at its price of under £20. The putting together, which of course is left to the purchaser, is well within the capabilities of anyone who can handle a few simple tools (in fact, just a screwdriver, a pair of pliers and a soldering iron). The subsequent polishing is not so easy, but the design is so straightforward that even that should present no problems with one of the modern "Do it yourself" materials. P.W.

Collaro TRP594 Record Playing Unit. Price: £10 10s. tax paid and including mono type 'O' or 'P' pick-up cartridge. Collaro Ltd., Ripple Works, By-Pass Road, Barking, Essex.

The Collaro TRP594 is a "transcription" version of the RP594 which has been available (at £9.18.9) for some months. It differs from the latter in that it is fitted with a heavy, cast, non-ferrous turntable of 12-inches diameter in place of the 10-inch one of pressed steel. These turntables are interchangeable and the new one will presumably be available separately so that RP594 owners can upgrade their machines. Both turntables were sent with the machine on which this report is based to permit comparisons to be made.

The term "transcription unit" has no real significance these days: it merely indicates an intention on the part of the manufacturers to produce low values of motor noise and speed fluctuation, and it is a fact that the better he

carries out his task the less conscious are we of the presence of his product—a refreshing sort of advertising! Of late, "transcription" has been applied to motors with cast turntables, a reasonable distinction, as it suggests a large mass giving a good flywheel effect and a lathe-turned driving surface which is likely to be smoother and more nearly concentric than a pressing. In the present case a hollow bronze bearing topped by a captive steel ball forms the boss for the record centre hole and is a sliding fit over a lapped steel shaft which projects from the 13½ in. by 12½ in. steel unit plate carrying the remainder of the mechanism. A shaded pole induction motor is mounted on three soft rubber grommets as far from the pickup head as possible, and has a four-stepped pulley on its shaft. The speed change control brings the large rubber idler wheel into contact with the turntable rim and the correct diameter step easily and cleanly, neatly withdrawing it between levels so that it will not be damaged if the speed is changed whilst the motor is running. Motor and idler bearings are of the self-oiling type and were quite tight when the machine arrived, but eased to a smooth, free motion after a few hours' running; a satisfactory arrangement this, much better than having a sloppy bearing. An automatic stop is provided, operated by the comparatively rapid transit of the run-off groove and although it must of course add to the side pressure (actually 1½ grams) it is one of the lightest I have found. It can be easily disengaged if required by lifting the trip feed lever off the pin on the pickup lever, leaving a side pressure of less than 1 gram. The pickup arm is a strong plastic moulding with a counterbalance weight and a spring adjustment for stylus pressure. A plug-in shell will take a good selection of cartridges (a Collaro stereo C ceramic was supplied and will be reviewed in a later issue). There are 4 connecting pins and a locating guide. No lifting handle is fitted. Six springs, three mounting screws and other hardware are supplied as is a full-size drawing of the motor board cut out. 3 inches headroom above board and 2½ inches below are all that is required. My unit was finished in hard bronze enamel with black pickup and turntable.



Listening tests showed the 594 to be a very successful design. With the heavy turntable those ugly sisters, rumble and flutter, were well in the background and a comparison with a prince of motors (at more than twice the price) showed the 594 in quite a good light. Even with the cheaper turntable the performance was good, although some rumble now appeared and a trace of higher-pitched vibration from the motor was just audible.

There has long been a gap in the range of motors between roughly £9 and £19. The TP594 sits nicely in this gap, and with a performance approaching those in the higher price bracket will be deservedly popular. There are two suggestions one can make for improvement, though they would entail extra cost. The first is that the motor and turntable would justify a "transcription type" arm, and



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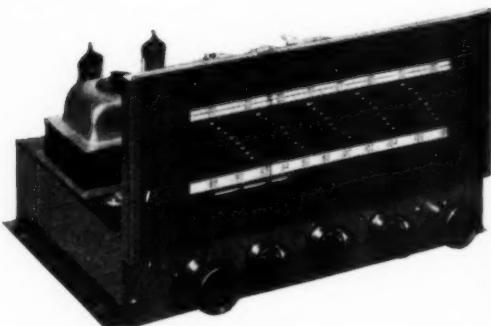
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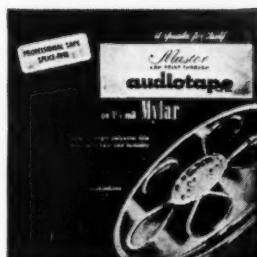
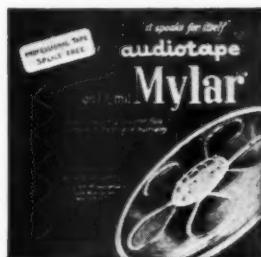
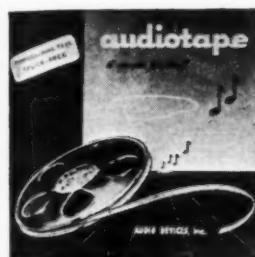
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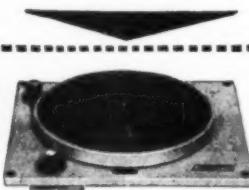
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the second is that in view of the self-effacing qualities desirable in good motors a click suppressor across the switch would be appreciated. Dubilier make a neat one for a few shillings, consisting of a 220-ohm resistor in series with a .01 mfd condenser in a small moulded case. G.E.H.

Heathkit F.M. Tuner Kit. Model 4V. Price £13 12s. 6d. (incl. P.T.). Daystrom Ltd., Gloucester.

Maker's Specification:

Tuning Range: 88 Mc/s to 108 Mc/s.
I.F. Frequency: 10.7 Mc/s.
Aerial: 75 ohms co-axial.
I.F. Rejection: Greater than 50 dB.
Image Rejection: Greater than 32 dB.
A.M. Suppression: 30 dB minimum.
Local Oscillator Drift: Less than ± 25 Kc/s.
Back Lash (mechanical): Not greater than 25 Kc/s at any point in the band.
Quiescent Sensitivity: 2.5 μ V for 20 dB quieting.
25 μ V for 45 dB quieting.
(no audible noise)
Harmonic Distortion: Less than 1% Input 1 mV,
1 Kc/s modulation and ± 75 Kc/s deviation.
Frequency Response: ± 2 dB from 20-20,000 c/s.
Output Voltage: Nominal 1 volt \pm megohm load.
(20 μ V input, ± 22 Kc/s deviation)
Scale Length: 6.5 in.
Power Requirements: 100-110, 120-130, 200-210, 220-230, 240-250 volts A.C., 40-60 c/s, 50 watts.
Value Complement: 7. ECC85, EF89, EF89, EF80, EB91, EM64, EZ80.
Dimensions: 7 in. deep by 5 in. high by 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Weight: Tuner Unit FMT-4U: 8 ozs. L.F. Amplifier FMA-4U, complete with case and valves: 9 lbs.

This F.M. Tuner kit is one of the new Heathkit units we saw at the opening of the new Daystrom factory in Gloucester just before Christmas. It is a lovely factory-clean, well-lit, convenient and rationalised—and it contains really sumptuous testing and calibrating equipment, installed not only for the purpose of ensuring that the prototypes of the kits issued by the firm shall conform to a high technical standard, but also that samples of the actual kits themselves when constructed shall come up to the claimed specification and performance. I wish I could afford to have testing equipment of this standard installed in a prefab at the bottom of my garden. (My wife would insist on the remoteness of the prefab!) But for that I must rely on the facilities available to my colleague John Gilbert and to my other colleagues in Oxford. My personal assessments will be based on the more limited, yet still substantial, equipment (including my wife's ears) that I have in my own home. I shall, in fact, try to give an assessment based on ordinary, everyday experience which could be available to Mr. Everyman.

I explain this, by way of preamble, because I think that ordinary home experience is just as important, and in the case of audio tests more important, than instrumental assessments.

Again, in the case of the F.M. tuner at present under review, and indeed of all kit sets, I think it desirable that the kit should be made up in the first place by someone quite new and inexperienced in the art. It is, alas, one of the features of this method that the wastage of personnel is terrific. When we reviewed the Heathkit Transistor portable I induced my wife to do the donkey work. (And very well indeed she did it!) But now she regards herself as an expert. So on this occasion I passed it on to a friend of mine who is a working carpenter and quite inexperienced in radio or electronic work or even wiring and soldering. He just followed, step by step, the instructions given in the Heathkit manual which is supplied with the kit. Like my wife before him he found the job fascinating, particularly as his wife thought it a miracle that he should be able to make the thing work. And work it did at first go! He came round to me proudly, and in triumph, and anxious to try his hand at the next piece of equipment. In fact he has now built the Heathkit stereo amplifier; and that, too, worked at first shot, so that his prowess has gone up even more in his wife's estimation.

But, alas, *ubris* (hubris) will have its toll. Over Christmas the tuner pattered out, for no apparent reason, and when I came back home my friend brought it round to me with a rueful face. So my colleagues and I had a look at it and found 7 "dry" joints on the printed circuit board. My wife rather preens herself about this because she only had one dry joint in her effort and she found it herself!

Of course, this was no criticism of the kit itself, for the manual gives full and easily understandable instructions about soldering technique. But there is an art in it as well as a technique and this can only be learned by practice. It is a good practice therefore to go over the soldered joints again and, except on the printed circuit board, try by gentle pulling, yes, very gentle, but still positive pulling, to pull them apart. For a dry joint may not be immediately apparent in its effect on performance, but time will surely show. On the printed circuit board, it is safer just to go over the joints once again with the hot iron, so as to avoid the risk of pulling the gold off the board.

The two major faults committed by the novice in soldering a printed circuit are; first, using too large an iron, and second, not leaving a pencil-bit iron in contact quite long enough. The solder should in all cases be withdrawn first, and after it is withdrawn it is a good plan to hold together the two pieces that are being soldered with a small screwdriver before the iron is taken away.



When these joints had been attended to the tuner functioned in an exemplary fashion. The sensitivity was high and the noise suppression very good. Indeed, we rank this design as one of high quality. Oxford is rated as a fringe area, but the stations come in loud and clear. So we were optimistic that our measurements would show that the makers' specification would be borne out. We were not disappointed; here are our figures which can be compared with the specification given at the head of this report.

Sensitivity: 3 μ V for 20 dB quieting at 94 Mc/s.

I.F. Rejection: Certainly greater than 50 dB.

A.M. Rejection: Certainly greater than 30 dB.

Local Oscillator Drift: Completely negligible (we set the tuning overnight and it was "dead on" the following morning).

All in all, we class this as a first-rate tuner suitable for fringe areas as well as for local reception. We have only stressed certain points of difficulty because it is important that all possible snags should be revealed and dealt with in a kit set; most of them, in fact, are in the excellent manual, and if the details specified therein (and above) are looked after we see no reason why the veriest tiro should not be able to construct a satisfactory tuner without much heartburning. P.W.

The Paddock Tidy. Price: 39s. (10-in.-12-in.); 29s. 3d. (7-in.). Power Judd Ltd., 94 East Hill, London, S.W.18.

I have been intending for some little time to call readers' attention to this device which seems to me to fill a long-felt need. Now comes along a new model, improved in one or two respects, and my memory has received a jolt.

It is so tempting during the course of an evening to leave records lying about. I have



even kept for my album of horrors a coloured illustration of the decor of a modern lounge which shows a bright young thing operating a portable record player on the floor with records, not even in sleeves, strewn about the carpet and on the settee. It would make Cecil Watts, as indeed it made me, hold up his hands in sad bewilderment. I suppose that particular practice might be good for trade, but it is certainly not good for records.

What has been wanted is some small handy container for records, in their sleeves, which would not be so difficult as to tempt people not to use it.

Well, here it is, and with the very great advantage that the ends are spring loaded so that the sleeves and records when inserted will be under gentle side pressure. This means not merely that they will not readily be knocked over but also that they will be protected against warping. Since warping is one of the major causes of trouble in record playing these days, I strongly approve of this device. P.W.

Connoisseur Stereophonic Pickup Type CSI. Price £9 plus £3 4s. ld. purchase tax. A. R. Sugden & Co. (Engineers) Ltd., Market Street, Brighouse, Yorkshire.

Maker's Specification:

Output: 20 milliwatts each channel from normal stereo disc.
Load for velocity characteristic: 50,000 to 100,000 ohms.
Stylus: .0005 in. diamond.
Frequency response: 20-16,000 c/s. \pm 2 dBs.
Playing weight: 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 grams.



Mr. Arnold Sugden has probably had more experience with stereo discs than anyone outside the big recording companies and many readers will have heard his first demonstration of stereophonic reproduction from discs given at a time when the major companies were still keeping secret their own progress in this field. For this purpose he used a twin crystal cartridge and the ceramic model now to be described is a logical development of those early experiments. Inside a head moulding of typical Connoisseur styling are two tiny ceramic elements fixed in a damping material and operated via a flexible coupling in a groove of which rests the stylus bar. The latter has the diamond stylus at one end and at the other a small amount of damping material at the point where it is attached to a flat strip which is a sliding fit into a slot in the under cover. The whole stylus assembly can therefore be easily replaced. This head assembly will fit an adapted version of the existing Connoisseur mono arm

or, as in the present case, a new arm designed for it and fitted with a raising and lowering device operated by a large knob situated above the pivot. The arm is cast in a light alloy and the height setting is the only user adjustment. A positioning template and a magnetic rest are provided. On my sample the lateral friction was rather high and groove jumping took place (about 1 gram pressure was needed to start the arm moving in the balanced condition). A slight alteration of the locked pre-set adjustment was made and resulted in a force of less than half a gram being required. A check of the older unipivot Connoisseur arm, however, showed that less than one-tenth of a gram was sufficient in that case.

As the makers quote a rather wide range of load resistors as being suitable, two sets of measurements were made: one with a load of 50,000 ohms and a second with 100,000 ohms. With this particular pickup the lower load was obviously causing accentuation of the high note response and so only the figures for the higher load are given. It should be particularly noted that this pickup requires the amplifier to provide equalisation for the recording characteristic—unlike most crystals and ceramics which are designed to provide the necessary equalisation mechanically. Amplifier compensation has been allowed for in the figures below.

Frequency c/s	Left channel	Left crosstalk dB	Right channel	Right crosstalk dB
15 K	0	-14	-2	-16
14 K	+	-16	-1	-16
13 K	+	-16	0	-14
12 K	+	-14	+.5	-14
11 K	+	-13	+.1	-13
10 K	+	-13	+.5	-21
9 K	+	-11	+.5	-22
8 K	+	-11	+.5	-26
7 K	+	-12	0	-28
6 K	+	-13	-1	-30
5 K	0	-13	-1.5	-30
4 K	0	-14	-2	-30
3 K	0	-14	-2	-30
2 K	0	-15	-2	-32
1 K	0	-16	-2	-26
700	0	-20	-2.5	-24
400	-1.5	-20	-4	-22
200	-3	-22	-6	-22
100	-4	-23	-6.5	-22
70	-3	-24	-6.5	-20
40	0	-10	0	-12

There is no doubt that these results are outstandingly good for a ceramic cartridge. Not only is the frequency range wide and free from peaks, but the cross-talk is consistently the lowest of any pickup I have yet measured. As a result the separation is excellent and the quality clean and pleasant. It is necessary to keep reminding oneself that this is a ceramic and not one of the expensive magnetites to which I have become accustomed. The relatively high output makes for freedom from hum troubles and of course none can be induced from the motor. It is a pity that the low frequency resonance occurring at about 20 c/s tends to exaggerate motor noise (its effects can be seen on the figures for 40 c/s above) and can provoke acoustic feedback if the loudspeaker is close by. However, this is but a small disadvantage in an otherwise exemplary design. G.E.H.

Lustraphone LD/66 Dynamic Microphone.
Price: from 82s. 6d., dependent on impedance and mounting. Lustraphone Ltd., St. Georges Works, Regents Park Road, London, N.W.1.

From the early days of broadcasting, Mr. Maurice, the Managing Director of Lustraphone, has been developing various forms of microphones for professional and domestic purposes, and the Services. Their catalogue covers a wide range of electro-magnetic, moving-coil or dynamic and ribbon types together with stands, transformers, and, more recently, transistorised amplifiers. For the past few weeks I have been testing the new LD/66 moving-coil microphone



and the stereo ribbon microphone. Tests on the latter are not complete yet but early tests show its remarkable characteristics and performance.

The LD/66 was designed as a fairly cheap moving-coil microphone with a good performance and frequency response, and suitable to replace the crystal type of microphone usually supplied with tape recorders. It must be recognised that with a tape recorder costing anything between £30 and £70 a crystal microphone, if provided, will have various shortcomings. The better recorders are seldom provided with a microphone as the best can cost far more than the tape machine! For measurement purposes I use an A.K.G. condenser microphone which, with its amplifier, power supply and polar diagram control unit, costs over £150. Hence, how can one expect a crystal microphone costing shillings to compare with the medium price range moving-coil and ribbon types. I am not decrying the crystal microphone for it has its uses, one of these is its high voltage output, and it therefore requires a less ambitious amplifier to raise the level suitable for recording. In order to achieve high sensitivity the crystal is coupled to a very light metallic diaphragm which usually has several major resonances above 3 Kc/s. In order to compete with this sensitivity the designer of a moving-coil microphone has to use skill and ingenuity. Of recent years the design of the Lustraphone range of microphones has been the responsibility of Mr. Pontzen whose enthusiasm must have struck thousands of visitors to audio exhibitions.

The LD/66 microphone is housed in a neat high-impact polystyrene moulding, cream in colour. There are several forms of mounting and it can be supplied either with a stirrup so that it can be held in the hand or stood on a table. Alternatively there is a suitable mounting so that it can be mounted on a stand. The microphone itself has a 1.25-in. duralumin diaphragm with a domed centre and a radially curved depression giving good freedom of movement. Attached to the diaphragm is a miniature moving coil working in a tiny magnetic gap. Compared to the diaphragm a relatively massive permanent magnet is used with a high flux density in the gap. Dependent on its purpose, the microphone can be supplied with either a low impedance, line or high impedance output transformer. There is also a model which can be used with tape recorders such as the Grundig which use a polarised condenser microphone and where the polarising voltage could damage a normal moving-coil type. The model under test has a high impedance secondary winding on the miniature microphone transformer and a 6 ft screened lead is supplied. A neat moulded grille supports a gilt screen to

save the diaphragm from physical damage, and the various screws and stirrup are also finished in burnished gilt.

Coupling the LD/66 direct to a Heathkit millivoltmeter normal speech at one foot from the microphone gave an output of 10-20 mV. It was then tried with the Simon Minstrel tape recorder reviewed in THE GRAMOPHONE last month. It will be remembered that this tape recorder is provided with a built-in microphone of a crystal type hidden behind the front grille. Due to its close proximity to the motors it tends to pick up a small amount of motor noise and the use of an external microphone completely overcomes this disadvantage. A number of recordings were made both of speech and music and there is no doubt that the Lustraphone greatly improves the recorded quality. For some musical recordings the microphone was placed 3 feet in front of a Tannoy G.R. Fountain Autograph loudspeaker driven from an Acoustical Quad amplifier and FM tuner. Transients such as from percussion instruments were well recorded with a reproduced overall quality comparable with a high-quality medium-wave receiver.

Later a sine-wave oscillator was fed into the Quad amplifier and a Cossor 1049 oscilloscope connected direct to the LD/66. The Tannoy speaker is well known for the smoothness of its response and wide frequency range. The microphone was placed on the axis of the speaker unit and a frequency run made. Taking 1,000 c/s as a datum reference the output from the microphone was sensibly flat down to 100 c/s. As the frequency was lowered the output began to fall and was approximately 2 dB down at 70 c/s. Below that the standing wave pattern in the test room prevents accurate results, but there was still an output at 50 c/s. At frequencies above 1,000 c/s there was a small peak around 9 Kc/s and then a slight falling off to 13 Kc/s. Even at 20 Kc/s there was a readable output but as few medium-priced tape recorders give an audible output outside of the range of 8-9,000 c/s it will be seen that the Lustraphone microphone will offer a greater range than the recording machine. So, if you own a medium-priced recorder I would recommend that you try the LD/66. See if your retailer will loan you one, for on a few tape recorders using very sensitive crystal microphones and low valve amplification, the Lustraphone might not give sufficient output.

JOHN GILBERT

Ekco "Nine Octave" Record Reproducer, Model RP341. Price: £39 14s. 1d. plus £12 15s. Id. P.T. E. K. Cole, Ltd., Southend-on-Sea, Essex.

It is some time since THE GRAMOPHONE dealt with a complete record reproducer, but some months ago Percy Wilson, in the course of his travels, stayed for a meal at an hotel in the Cotswolds. In the background he heard an excellent gramophone and later discovered that it was an Ekco "Nine Octave" record reproducer, but whether it was the monophonic version or the stereo version I do not recall. However he was so impressed with it that he suggested that one should be obtained for the subject of a review.

The stereo version consists of two contemporary cabinets both housing complete amplifiers and loudspeaker systems, but the larger of the two also housing a Garrard RC121/Mark II four-speed automatic record changer. Each unit is complete in itself and as there are slight circuit differences they will be dealt with separately.

Monophonic Unit

The RP341 record reproducer, as will be seen from the accompanying picture, is a handsome reproducer consisting of a rectangular cabinet

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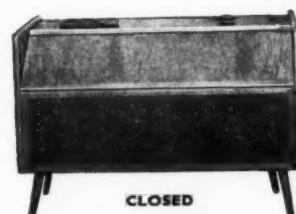
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It will house Tape Deck and/or Record Player—as well as F.M. Tuner and Stereo Amplifier, and storage space is provided for records, tapes and power amplifiers. Furthermore, to meet the needs of those with whom room-space is an overriding consideration, provision is made in the cabinet ends for matched Hi-Fi Stereo Speaker Systems. Parts "in the white" to finish to personal taste.

Mk.I Tape Deck or Record Player ...
Mk. II Tape Deck and Record Player

£15 18 6
£17 8 6



CLOSED



F.M. TUNER

This model is available as two units which, for your convenience, are sold separately. They comprise a Tuner Unit, Model FMT-4U (£3 2 0 including Purchase Tax) and an Amplifier Unit, making a total cost for the equipment of £13 12 6

The complete R.F. Unit is dispatched, wired, pre-amped and tested. Provision is made for stereophonic F.M. radio transmissions. Built-in power supply, 7 valves, 100,000 c/s. Internal 600 Ohm N.I. load, or external. Range 88-108 Mcs.



SSU-1

HI-FI SPEAKER SYSTEM Model SSU-1
This kit is easily assembled. It contains twin speakers and balance control in its ducted port reflex cabinet. It is equally suitable for stereo or mono in average room. Legs, £1.70. Less legs, £10 5 6

HI-FI STEREO 6-WATT AMPLIFIER Model S-33
Attractively styled, completely self-contained. Printed circuit makes it easy to build. Only 3% distortion at 2½ W/chal. U/L output, ganged controls. Positively your best buy in low-priced stereo. £11 8 0

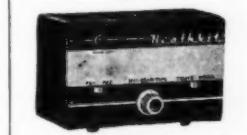
HI-FI STEREO 16-WATT AMPLIFIER Model S-88
Within its power rating this handsome-looking amplifier is believed to be the finest Stereo amplifier available, regardless of price. U/L push-pull output. 0.1% distn. at 6 Watts per channel. £25 5 6

TRANSISTOR PORTABLE RADIO Model UXR-1
Superbly styled, in beautiful solid hide case, with golden relief and crystal-clear, easy-to-tune dial, this completely self-contained, 6-transistor dual-wave set performs brilliantly everywhere, including in a car. Reproduction is exceptionally good. Printed circuit. £15 18 6

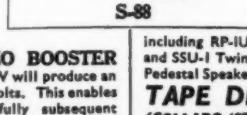
LOW INPUT HI-FI STEREO BOOSTER Model USP-1
An input of 2-20 mV will produce an output adjustable from 20 mV to 2 Volts. This enables low-input p.u.'s, etc., to load fully subsequent amplifiers of medium sensitivity. Negligible distortion. £5 19 6



S-33



S-88

**AUDIO SIGNAL GENERATOR Model AG-9U**

Delivers up to 10 volts pure sine-wave (less than 0.1% distortion, 20 c/s to 20 k c/s). Decade switch—selected frequencies from 10 to 100,000 c/s. Internal 600 Ohm N.I. load, or external. £19 3 0

AUDIO VALVE MILLIVOLT METER Model AV-3U

Measures from 1 mV to 300 V, at high impedance. 1% precision resistors, 200 μ A 4½" meter calibrated in volts and dBs. Ideal for measuring small AC voltages. \pm 1 dB, 10 c/s to 400 k c/s. £13 18 6

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Within its dissipation rating (25 watts continuous, 50 W. intermittent) this instrument is ideal for all audio power measurements. Meter calibrated in Watts and dBs. £13 18 6

TRANSCRIPTION RECORD PLAYER Model RP-1U (Collaro RP594)

with plug-in Ronette Stereo-Mono head. Mounted on attractive plinth (left "in the white" for final finish to choice). Completely assembled. £12 10 0

COMPLETE MATCHED STEREO OUTFIT

Including RP-1U Record Player, S-33 Stereo Amplifier and SSU-1 Twin Speaker Systems. £42 10 0
Pedestal Speaker legs £2 14 0 optional extra.

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(COLLARO 'STUDIO' & TRUVOX TD-1 Mk. 6) by agreement with the manufacturers are now available for sale with associated equipment "packaged deals". Details sent on request.



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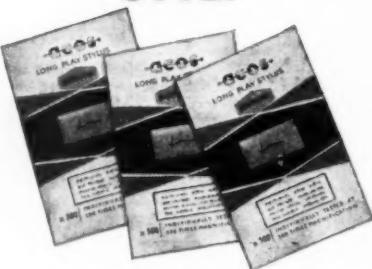


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Don't attack your records with a blunt instrument. Don't grind away the grooves. Give your discs the care they deserve by fitting replacement styli at the right time, of the right type, of the best quality. Acos make many of the most successful cartridges and pick-ups in the world. As you would expect, therefore, Acos replacement styli, also, are unsurpassed for precision and good value—part of the Acos contribution towards faithful sound reproduction at reasonable cost.

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Ekco RP341

measuring 19½ in. wide by 16½ in. deep and 15 in. high. Including the legs the overall height with the lid closed is 31½ in. As the lid conceals the record changer it is 5½ in. deep and closes with the aid of a pneumatic lid stay. The record changer is mounted flush with the top of the cabinet but insulated acoustically by means of helical springs. The cabinet houses three loudspeakers, a 10 in. by 6 in. elliptical speaker behind the front grille, and two 4 in. diameter circular speakers, one at each side. The amplifier is completely shielded and mounted on the right-hand side and has the following controls:—1. Input selector switch; 2. Treble lift and cut control; 3. Bass lift and cut control; 4. Volume control. There is a separate double pole mains switch and a screened co-axial socket when one wishes to use the amplifier in conjunction with a radio tuner or tape machine.

Mounted separately within the cabinet is the a.c. mains power supply unit, the voltage selector control being accessible through the base of the cabinet. When the lid is closed the cabinet is sealed with the exception of a tuned port on the lower side of the cabinet. As it is most important that the lid is fully closed a push-bar catch operates automatically. If the lid is left open there is a considerable loss in bass response due to air leakage between the cabinet and the record player. The whole of the amplifier unit can be separated from the cabinet by removing six Philips' headed screws, and unplugging the power supply and signal leads from the pickup and loudspeakers.

The complete amplifier, less the power pack, is housed in a screened box measuring 7 in. by 5 in. by 4½ in. and is removed without disturbing any of the control knobs. The amplifier circuit consists of four stages using Mullard valves. As the Garrard record player has plug-in heads for monophonic or stereo discs, the input circuit of the amplifier has a three-position switch, the third position being used for external signal inputs. The necessary correction circuits for the crystal pickups are placed before the input valve which is one half of an ECC83 double triode. This valve has a gain control in its cathode circuit which is accessible through the control panel and is only used for setting the

overall amplifier stage gain to a predetermined value. In the grid circuit there is a ganged twin volume control, the second part feeding a signal to the Ekco matching stereo unit SU341. The first stage is R.C. coupled to the second half of the ECC83 and between the stages are the variable bass and treble controls. Again R.C. coupling feeds the amplified signal to an EF86 pentode valve strapped as a triode and with equal anode and cathode loads. The third stage therefore acts as a phase splitter and feeds a pair of EL34 valves symmetrically using R.C. coupling. The push-pull output stage operates in an ultra-linear fashion and is designed to produce a power output of 8 watts peak. The power supply is mounted on a separate chassis with the mains transformer tapped for all voltages between 200 and 250 V. a.c. 50 c/s. A full-wave valve rectifier, EZ80, is used together with high value electrolytic capacitors. The resistance-capacitor smoothing is particularly generous for the hum level at full volume is hardly audible.

The low and medium frequency elliptical loudspeaker is made by Goodmans and uses a large magnet system. The two 4 in. tweeter units have fully sealed backs to prevent modulation of the cones by the low frequency air waves in the cabinet, and are connected to the bass speaker through a two microfarad capacitor. The acoustic chamber is individually tuned at the factory for the best performance by means of an adjustable slot in the cabinet base. This is obviously done with some care for there is an open circuiting plug mounted in the base of the cabinet so that a very pure variable frequency signal can be applied to the loudspeaker assembly without the use of the internal amplifier.

The Garrard RC121/Mark II automatic record changer is provided with four speeds and plug-in heads. It will handle mixed size records provided that the smaller diameter records are placed on top of the pile.

As the amplifier system is somewhat similar to that used in the matching stereo unit SU341 and as it was more convenient to take measurements from that unit, no precise measurements were made of the RP341 amplifier alone. However a number of measurements were made with the aid of calibrated Decca test records and an oscillograph and power output meter. The maximum power output of the amplifier with a 3 ohm dummy load in place

of the loudspeaker system with 1% harmonic distortion was found to be 7.5 watts at 1 Kc/s. Above 13 Kc/s the output from the loudspeakers appears to diminish in volume although the output from the amplifier when a signal is applied to the tuner/tape input is within -3 dB even at 50 Kc/s. If the cabinet is placed across a corner with hard walls to act as H.F. deflectors the output level at the highest frequencies is raised audibly. The elliptical loudspeaker appears to be quite efficient even above 10 Kc/s when one listens in line with the axis of the speaker but the use of the two tweeters gives a far wider spread of high frequency information than one could expect from a single unit.

I have played a wide variety of modern LP records for the past two months on the equipment and can find nothing but praise for it. It certainly covers the nine octaves although there is a falling off below 60 c/s. As a complete instrument only costing 50 gns. it must be one of the best available having more than adequate power capacity for domestic conditions, wide frequency response and tone control ranges. Mains hum is only audible if the volume control is fully on and the bass boost circuit set at its maximum, conditions never required in practice. Used with the new Leak Trough-Line FM tuner—a full report on this item will appear shortly—one could thoroughly enjoy the B.B.C. sound transmissions with a reality seldom heard from the best VHF sets.

Stereophonic Unit, SU331 (28 gns. rax free).

Although the RP341 record reproducer is complete in itself it is necessary to have an additional amplifier and loudspeaker system to reproduce stereo records. In order to provide this facility Ekco have introduced a matching unit which in appearance is similar to the record reproducer minus the record changer and lid. Included with the stereo reproducer is a Garrard plug-in stereo pickup head and a co-axial cable some 11 ft. 6 in. long to couple the two units together. The amplifier is mounted on the right-hand side of the cabinet and has three variable controls for volume, bass and treble.

Again there is a separate double pole on/off mains switch and screened coaxial socket for the input from the record reproducer. The amplifier differs in several respects from that used in the record reproducer. The input is fed direct to the grid of an EF86 which is resistance coupled to the triode section of an ECL82. Between the first two stages there are resistor-capacitor networks giving treble cut and lift and bass boost and cut and a volume control. The output from the triode section of the ECL82 is directly coupled to the grid circuit of the triode section of a further ECL82. This triode has equal anode and cathode load resistors and acts as a phase splitter feeding the pentode sections of each of the ECL82 valves. This push-pull stage operates in a conventional way as distinct from the ultra-linear push-pull connection used in the record reproducer. The loudspeaker arrangement is exactly the same using a tuned cabinet. With the exception of the mains transformer all the components for the amplifier are mounted on a neat chassis. The mains transformer is tapped for use with 200-250 V. a.c. main supplies at 50 c/s. In this unit a full-wave metal rectifier is used in place of a valve rectifier, and very adequate resistor-capacitor smoothing is used.

The following figures indicate the performance of the amplifier and measurements were taken with a 3-ohm non-inductive load in place of the loudspeakers. The input signal was derived from a Solartron R.C. oscillator and fed through a Dawe Microvoltmeter so that input signal from 1 volt down to one microvolt could be used. This output was measured with an Airmec millivoltmeter to check the accuracy of the



Ekco SU341

output level. The output from the amplifier was fed to a Heathkit output meter which has inbuilt dummy loads of various values, and the accuracy of the instrument is exceptionally high. Also a harmonic distortion meter (Marconi) was connected across the load with a Cossor 1049 double beam oscilloscope.

The equipment was set up to give maximum undistorted power at 1,000 c/s with the tone controls set to give a flat frequency characteristic. The following table gives the power output at other frequencies, all being measured with a total harmonic distortion of 1%.

Frequency c/s	30	62	125	250	500	1K	2K	4K	8K	16K
Watts	1.7	5.1	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.0	7.0	6.0	
Input voltage required for 1 watt						1,000 c/s				40mV.
Distortion at 1 watt						7.5 watts				100mV.
" " 7 watts						" "				0.45%
" " 7 watts						" "				0.9%

With a power output of 50 mW at 1,000 c/s as a reference the tone controls were set to give a substantially level frequency response which then extended from 50 c/s to 15 Kc/s. Below 50 c/s the output was -2 dB at 30 c/s and above 15 Kc/s it was -2.5 dB at 20 Kc/s. Actually the output was still measurable at 50 Kc/s but it should be noted that these figures apply to the amplifier only.

The bass control at maximum cut position gave an output of -11 dB at 50 c/s and a bass boost of +8 dB at 50 c/s. Below this figure the bass boost fell off to +6 dB at 30 c/s. The treble control gives a lift of +10 dB at 10 Kc/s and continues rising to +13 dB at 20 Kc/s. When set at maximum treble cut it reduces the treble output to -15 dB at 10 Kc/s. The two controls are independent of each other and adequately compensate for variations in recording characteristics.

On aural tests with constant frequency inputs the top register of the stereo unit appeared to be rather stronger than that of the mono one, and certainly extended to about 15 Kc/s. At the base end there is a slight lift at 90 c/s but then it continues smoothly down to 60 c/s with a reduced output at 30 c/s. The connection between the two units is made by a screened coaxial cable which was found to be slightly microphonic. This effect is only noticeable if the cable is moved about and is due to slight movement between the inner and outer conductors. The modus operandi of adjusting the two relative amplifier levels is quite simple. Using the stereo cartridge and a monophonic record the volume level of the record reproducer is adjusted to a convenient level. Then the volume level of the stereo reproducer is adjusted so that the sound appears to come centrally between the two units. After this adjustment has been made the overall volume from the two units is controlled from the ganged volume control on the record reproducer. The treble and bass controls of each unit are independent of one another and they should be set to approximately the same positions on each unit.

Although I was trained as a classical musician I find that for some tests popular recordings produce outstanding stereo results. One such record is the Audio Fidelity Dukes of Dixieland (AFSD5823) which has a remarkable section with a plucked double-bass to the accompaniment of a snare side drum and piano played very quietly. This record showed up the excellent bass register of the Ekco equipment and its freedom from resonances. For more serious listening I thoroughly enjoyed the fantastic Decca recording of *Aida* (SXL2167-9). All the splendour of the massed fanfare of trumpets in the Triumphal scene was brilliant, and the overall result compares favourably with equipment costing twice as much. Where space is a factor this Ekco equipment will completely fill the stereo picture with its elegance, beautiful finish and excellent performance.

JOHN GILBERT

BOOK REVIEWS

The Stereo Record Guide. Edward Greenfield, Ivan March, and Denis Stevens. St. Ann's Press, Altrincham. 21s.

This book, sponsored by the enterprising owner of The Long Playing Record Library at Blackpool, is designed to give the owners, or would-be owners, of stereophonic equipment "a simple and immediate guide as to choice so far available in this country". It contains also a foreword by Percy Wilson on "The coming of stereo".

The order of music under each composer's name follows that of THE GRAMOPHONE's Classical LP Catalogue, and from one to three stars are used in the evaluation of the records concerned. The book includes light music (that is popular music, but not Jazz and Swing) as well as the more weighty material. There is useful advice about the care of stereo records and about equipment. All books of this kind become to some extent out of date as soon as they are published, in spite of a supplement of late arrivals, but this one will give the hesitating reader a clear idea of the benefits of stereo and much excellent and well judged criticism of the existing repertoire up to the time of its publication. It is very much worth while possessing.

A.R.

Stereo Handbook. By G. A. Briggs. 146 pp., 88 illustrations. Price: 10s. 6d. Wharfedale

Wireless Works Ltd., Idle, Bradford, Yorks. Gilbert Briggs has done it again. When I learned that he was writing a book on stereo I knew that we were in for something exciting; and when he sent me a questionnaire to answer I knew it was going to be both stimulating and controversial as well.

It is! Nothing is taken for granted save only the integrity of his friends. He subjects everything and all of us to his inimitable wit and good-humoured common sense.

As usual, this open-minded tolerance of the opinions of other folk, together with a strict closed-minded adherence to standards of performance, is most refreshing. Even when one feels obliged to dissent from his conclusion (which in my case is only rarely) one is bound to agree that it is not unreasonable and that he would clearly be ready to change it if additional evidence were forthcoming. Thus, though he seems rather to scoff at one point about my claim to be able to play records with less than 1-gram playing weight, I now have it from him in a letter (since the book was published) that "I am now convinced that your claims are justified and that record wear should become a thing of the past".

Both the gaiety of nations and the interests of truth are thus served. But I do hope that his retort to Stanley Kelly's forthrightness will not induce him to withdraw his liqueurs *sine die*!

The technical details of the book have been "edited" by Raymond Cooke and some of the technical analyses have been contributed by Stanley Kelly (on pickups), Norman Crowhurst (on American techniques), Cecil Watts (on records and stylus wear), and several others on different aspects of the stereo field.

The Chapters are: The General Position; Other Views; Sound Source Effects; Tonal Discrimination; Recording Techniques; Hum, Rumble and Noise; Pickups; Tonearms and Turntables; Records and Stylus Wear; Amplifiers; Loudspeakers; Stereo Tapes; Room Acoustics; Concert Halls; Broadcasting; Questions and Answers. All in 136 pages.

It is surprising that as much useful information could be given in such simple fashion in so few pages. Every chapter, almost, could well be expanded to a book of the same size. Yet the gist is nearly always here even if much of the elaborate philosophy and technology is not

pursued. The only paragraphs that I have found inadequate are those on "tone-arms" (a term, by the way, which I deprecate) which, like the term itself is several years out of date; and (curiously enough) those on column loudspeakers where the measures devised to avoid having the response determined by two notes, one high and one low, with everything else just suspended between, are not mentioned. Another curious omission is the E.M.I. system of two Figure-of-8 microphones at right angles to each other. Nor are the contributions made by Blumlein in other respects adequately recognised. I mention this particularly since I am convinced that any account of stereo is bound to be lacking if it is not based on a study of the Blumlein techniques and those developed by the Philips engineers in Holland.

But all in all this is a thrilling book. I can overlook its patchiness in some places in the appreciation I have of its frank integrity. Awkward questions are not shirked, shortcomings are freely admitted but enthusiasm, both romantic and realist, are not extinguished thereby. I have not enjoyed reading any book or magazine about stereo so much as this. It is indeed a challenge and therefore a "must".

P.W.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor does not necessarily agree with any views expressed in letters printed. Address: The Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

Dialogue in G. and S.

Mr. Chislett, in his review of the recent Decca recording of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, gave his opinion against including the dialogue in these Operas, though he admitted that many may think otherwise. In case Decca should only see his opinion in print, I should like to register myself, through these columns, as one who "thinks otherwise".

My own view is, to quote Mr. Chislett's review, that the dialogue takes away any feeling of listening to a concert performance. It is as essential as mortar to bricks, and I would willingly pay for the extra disc necessary. Also, it is often very amusing in itself, especially in such operas as the *Mikado*, and I greatly regretted that the new recording was without it. Could Decca arrange for an "acting" session, and by careful tape editing, insert the dialogue in the appropriate places?

In my opinion, H.M.V. has missed a great opportunity of scoring over Decca's monopoly of the D'Oyly Carte Company, by omitting dialogue in their versions.

Let me finish on this note. These new recordings are outstandingly good. With dialogue, I shall buy them all, without it, I shall not buy one. Perhaps they could be recorded with dialogue on three discs, and the musical numbers issued on a two-disc set.

Sheffield.

M. H. A. FINCH.

Stereo Crazy

My cry from the heart (October issue) has at least evoked one expression of understanding and sympathy, and I am indeed grateful to Mr. Gay of Midhurst for his helpful and most entertaining letter published in your January issue.

Of course, Mr. Gay is right, stereo is fabulous, and because I knew it was and yet couldn't make it so in my own home I was tempted to blame the records whereas, as I have since found out, my equipment was the chief culprit.

I certainly have not regretted my journey into hi-fi stereophony. Learning by experience

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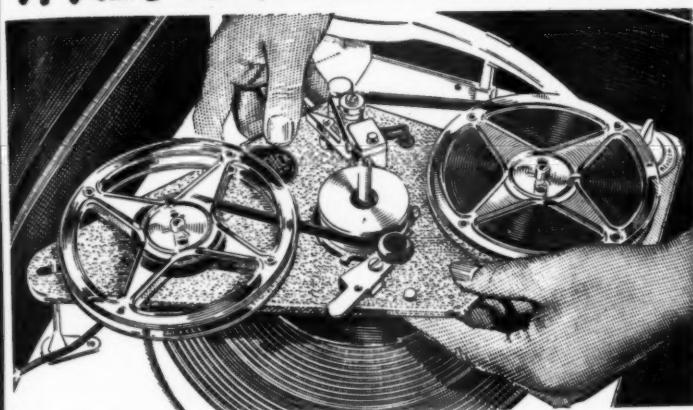
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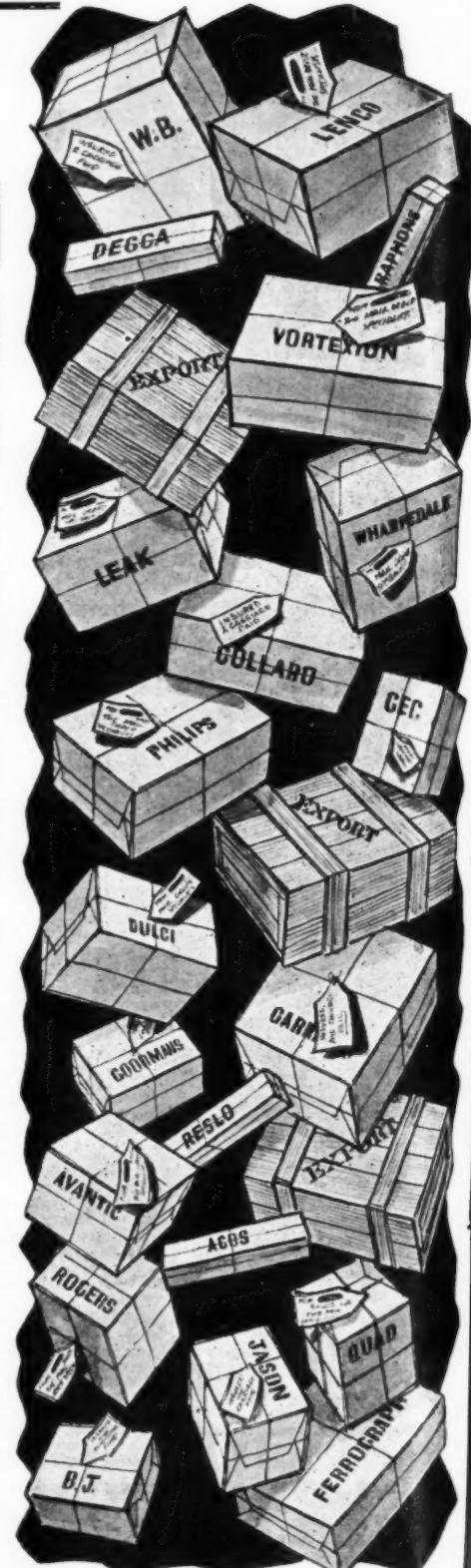
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is certainly a good way to learn, albeit rather expensive. I was originally using a crystal pick-up into a low gain pre-amplifier with two 4-watt power amplifiers. When I purchased a more expensive pre-amplifier, ostensibly to enable me to use a magnetic pick-up, the immediate result was a vastly improved reproduction from my existing pick-up—an Acc 701. Apparently the crystal input on the low gain pre-amplifier was not compensated at all whereas it is on the new one. Further improvement occurred when I asked the manufacturers of the new pre-amplifier to match it to the impedance of the crystal I was using. The importance of this matching can only really be appreciated by having lived with the mis-matched sound for some time. The quality I am now getting can certainly be compared with the best I have heard at demonstrations.

From my experience to date I can only confirm Mr. Gay's conclusions, particularly regarding the necessity of correct matching of pick-ups, etc., and I hope that his general conclusions, and mine, will help others branching out into stereophony. It is a journey that is really necessary if faithful musical reproduction is the aim.

Cheshunt, Herts.

E. E. TELFER.

I cannot entirely agree either with the undoubtedly pessimism of Mr. Telfer or the breezy enthusiasm of Mr. Gay (October and January issues respectively). Nevertheless my sympathies go out to the former because I too have suffered disillusionment and frustration over stereophonic recording. Unlike Mr. Telfer, however, I have arrived at this latest marvel after a long apprenticeship, since I acquired my first gramophone over fifty years ago. Over this long period I have learnt that every new advance in technique has its teething troubles. Some of the early LPs were shockers and apart, from their physical characteristics were inferior in tonal quality to their immediate 78 predecessors. The picture today, however, is very different and it can therefore be hopefully assumed that the same improvement will in due course be noted in the new field of stereophony.

My general criticism of stereo records is that they are, with certain notable exceptions, somewhat deficient in bass response and lacking in fullness of sound. It appears that I am not alone in this opinion as those, who like myself, read your record reviews with minute attention, cannot have failed to notice how frequently this deficiency is commented on by reviewers, often followed by a rider to the effect that the mono version would be more acceptable on that account. I myself recently had the opportunity of comparing on my own equipment both the mono and stereo versions of a well-known piano concerto. In the stereo version the double basses, except perhaps for one overworked individual, had apparently decided to take no part in the recording, whereas the mono version disclosed a full team, playing with vigour and enthusiasm. Now, no one wants to go back to the days of "boom" but the throb and resonance of a large orchestra are indeed essential to a good recording and their lack destroys a great part of the pleasure of listening. This then is one of my frustrations inasmuch as we have gained so much in one direction only to have lost something in another.

I am still not happy about the "directional" effect, so much lauded and publicised. In the concert hall or opera house one is really not conscious of the sound of any one instrumental group coming from any particular direction. I have been at some pains to check up on this during recent visits to the Festival Hall and elsewhere and unless I deliberately focus my attention on, say a woodwind player who at

that moment has a solo passage, the directional effect, as a whole, seems to be of little importance. True, the overall sound comes to me from a wide arc and not through a hole in the wall and the illusion of this spread of sound is created by the two-speaker system. When, however, the higher strings come at me firmly from my left-hand speaker and the 'cellos and basses equally firmly from the right-hand one, then I find this separation too pronounced and therefore unreal. No doubt this is how the conductor hears it but I don't choose to sit in the front row but in a position where the arc of sound subtends a smaller angle. It may be therefore that in the normal room we are too close, like sitting in the front row of the stalls, and the speakers should be removed to 20 or 30 feet from the listening position in order to diminish the separation effect—not however a very practical solution for the ordinary home.

Then again, how does anyone know where all these sounds should really come from? At a Klemperer concert last autumn I noticed that the double basses were placed on the left-hand side of the orchestra. If this position were adopted at a recording session, and why not if that is what the conductor prefers, and if the sound of the basses then very properly emerged from the left-hand speaker, the unfortunate listener, not knowing the form, would probably go mad twiddling his balance control knob or call loudly for his service engineer to overhaul his equipment. The only solution to this that I can see is that a chart of the orchestra positions should be issued with every record.

It really does seem to me that the mono record, played through stereo equipment, has a lot to recommend it, particularly if it is, as is often the case, superior to its stereo counterpart in fullness of sound. Furthermore quite a degree of stereophonic effect is in fact achieved, the sound is spread over a wide arc and soloists, vocal or instrumental, appear to come from the middle surrounded by the orchestra. What is more important, although I admit that a certain amount of inner clarity is lost, the separation effect is less obtrusive and the resultant sound more realistic in consequence.

I find therefore that this is frustrating, that we have magnificent equipment but have to compromise with the records we play on it. Stereophonic recording has hit the public in a big way, many of whom I suspect of never having heard a live orchestra, aided by publicity which often verges on the hysterical. Some debunking seems to be necessary if only to jolt the manufacturers out of their smugness, and this can only be done if we music lovers speak our minds.

Crewkerne, Som.

R. B. MACLEOD.

Sellick and Smith

Writing his "Passing Notes" in the December, 1958 issue of *THE GRAMOPHONE*, Mr. Arthur Jacobs referred to the piano duettists, Phyllis Sellick and Cyril Smith, and stated "Miss Sellick surprisingly told me the other day that the partners have not yet been invited to record in their new role" as a three-handed team. Since that was written, more than a full year has passed, and still no new discs by this talented couple are forthcoming. I am sure that many people must, with me, regret this, and regard it as a sad reflection upon the record companies. When suggesting new recordings by Smith and Sellick it would, of course, be comparatively easy to advance a plea on the grounds of sentiment, and to indicate that their gallant achievement ought to merit some special consideration. I am quite sure however that Mr. Smith would deplore any such bid for sympathy, and indeed none is needed, for he and his wife have worked

at their three-handed playing until they have now developed such technical brilliance and assurance that their performances can stand comparison, not unfavourably, with the work of any more orthodox four-handed combination.

The concert platform, radio, and television have all been quick to welcome the re-emergence of this well-loved team of pianists in their new three-handed guise: only the gramophone companies remain either uncomprehending or indifferent.

No doubt many of your readers would join with me in supporting an appeal for recordings of some of the music which Mr. Smith and Miss Sellick play with such distinction. If those readers would care to write to me, I will duly pass their comments "en bloc" to one of the recording companies.

19 Edgware Road,
Blackburn, Lancs.

JAMES READ.

An Apology

We should like to apologise to Miss Birgit Nilsson and all your readers for an unfortunate confusion of thinking which led to a "slip of the typewriter" and caused us to describe Miss Nilsson in our advertisement in your February issue as a "Norwegian singer". As is correctly stated on the sleeve of the record in question and by at least one careful reader who has been kind enough to write to us Miss Birgit Nilsson is, of course, Swedish.

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The Lure of the 78s

The trouble, it seems to me, with so many recordings these days, is that one becomes so wrapped up with the wonderful clarity, tonal fidelity and so forth that the "feeling" of the music, which after all is its main purpose, just simply fails to come through. I have an old H.M.V. set of the Sibelius Symphony No. 5 by Kajanus and the London Symphony. The surfaces are atrocious, the orchestral sound boxy in the extreme and yet from this museum piece there are conveyed the composer's fogs, icebergs and noble triumphs in a way that no hi-fi record has ever conveyed them to me. Have any other readers noticed this strange phenomenon and could anybody give it a name? Your magazine is read with great enjoyment, even though most of the records described are unobtainable here.

Auckland, N.Z.

A. F. PAYNE.

REVIEWERS' NOTES

A. R. writes:—I must apologise for having said in my review of the Leider, Melchior, Schorr disc last month (H.M.V. COLH105) that the great Wagnerian tenor "was no longer with us". Mr. Gordon Whelan tells me that he is very much alive, that he has recently made a new record in America, and will be heard on the B.B.C. in a tribute on the occasion of his 70th birthday, on March 20th. He also says that he has been broadcasting and "singing splendidly". No doubt other readers will have written to the same effect by the time this apology is printed. To them also, thanks.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Hi-Fi in Liverpool 23

The Lambda Record Company have organised a Hi-Fi Exhibition in the lounge of the Regent Cinema, Liverpool Road, Great Crosby, on April 28th, 29th (both days 5 p.m.-10.45 p.m.), and 30th (3 p.m.-10.45 p.m.). Manufacturers taking part include Wharfedale, Dulci, Dynatron, Record Housing and Decca.

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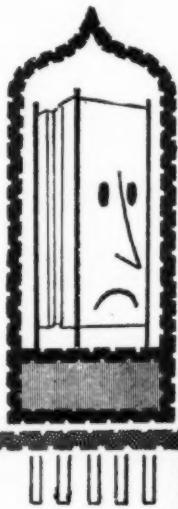


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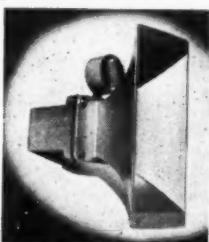


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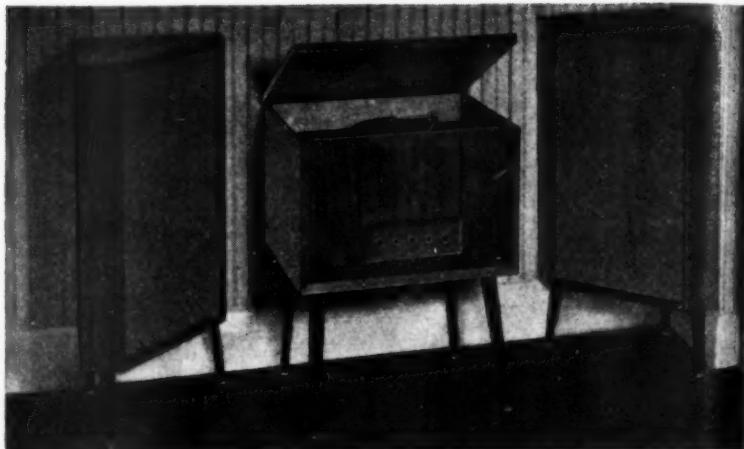
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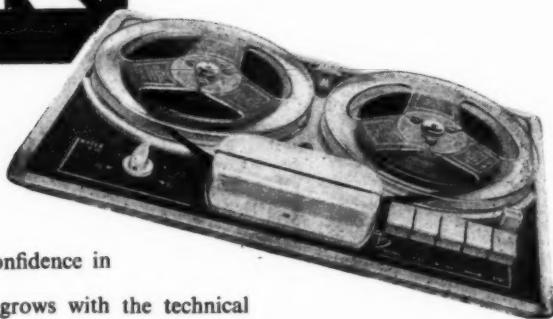


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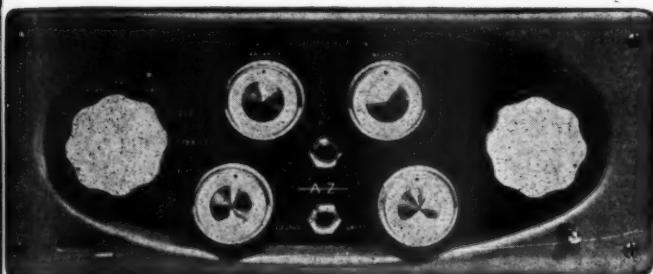


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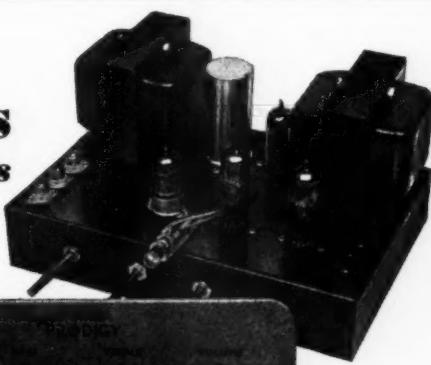
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(Carriage and Insurance 5/- extra.)

COMPLETE MULLARD 3-3

The ideal Amplifier for a small high-quality installation, providing reproduction up to 3 watts output. Our kit complies to the MULLARD specification including supply of specified components, valves and PARMEKO OUTPUT TRANSFORMER. We also include switch inputs for both a Radio post and Extra power to drive a Radio Tuning Unit is also available.

COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS £7.10.0 Alternatively ASSEMBLED AND TESTED £8.19.6

(Plus 6/6 Carriage and Insurance.) H.P. Terms: Deposit £2 and 8 monthly payments of £1.

STEREO DUAL CHANNEL

PRE-AMPLIFIER

This model incorporates two Two-valve Pre-amplifiers combined into a Single unit enabling it to be used for both STEREOPHONIC or MONAURAL operation. It is designed primarily to operate with our range of MULLARD MAIN AMPLIFIERS and will also operate equally well with any make of Amplifier requiring an input of 250 m.vols. When ordering please advise MAKE and Model of Amplifier in use. COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS £12.10.0

Alternatively ASSEMBLED AND TESTED £15.00

H.P. Terms: Dep. £3, 12 months at £1/2. Operates equally well for MONAURAL Only operation, with one Main or a "5-10" Main Amplifier to which the second Main Amplifier can at any time be added, thus very easily providing for both STEREO or STEREO DUAL CHANNEL MONAURAL reproduction.

COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS £12.10.0

ASSEMBLED AND TESTED £15.00

H.P. Terms: Dep. £3, 12 months at £1/2. Operates equally well for MONAURAL Only operation, with one Main or a "5-10" Main Amplifier to which the second Main Amplifier can at any time be added, thus very easily providing for both STEREO or STEREO DUAL CHANNEL MONAURAL reproduction.

STEREO AMPLIFIER

A thoroughly recommended design that very effectively fulfills all your requirements for a low-priced but good quality DUAL-CHANNEL STEREO-PHONIC AMPLIFIER. Output sockets from Stereo or Monaural Gram. Inputs. Prices: COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS £8.10.0 Alternatively ASSEMBLED AND TESTED £10.10.0

STEREO "3-3" MAIN AMPLIFIER

Comprises two "3-3" MAIN AMPLIFIERS on one chassis and is designed to operate with our DUAL CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIERS for both Stereophonic or Monaural operation. Prices: COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS £10.00 Alternatively ASSEMBLED & TESTED £11.15.0

H.P. Terms: Deposit £2/7/- 12 months at 17/4. Its output power is 6 watts (3 watts per channel).

The "ADD-A-DECK"

Incorporating the NEW B.S.R. "MONARDECK" and MATCHED PRE-AMPLIFIER Deposit £3.12/-. 12 months £4.16/2 (plus 7/6 Carr. & Ins.)

Designed to operate through the Pick-up of your standard RADIO RECEIVER. A single-speed Twin Track

Tape Deck, incorporating matched Pre-amplifier and operating at 33 in./sec. speed. It uses 5-in. Tape Spools for playing up to 1 hour, playing time 1 hr. Tapes of 1 hour on the standard 5-in. Tape Spools. The equipment is supplied fully tested and completely assembled on an attractive wood plinth. Only requires connections to the mains supply and the Pick-up Sockets.

Please enclose S.A.E. if ILLUSTRATED and DESCRIPTIVE LEAFLETS are required... also the ASSEMBLY MANUALS containing component Prices and Drawings, etc., are available at 1/6 each.

SPECIAL PRICE REDUCTIONS

(a) The KIT OF PARTS to build both the "5-10" Main Amplifier and the 2-stage PRE-AMP CONTROL UNIT £15.10.0

(b) The "5-10" and the 2-stage PRE-AMP both ASSEMBLED and TESTED £18.18.0 H.P. Dep. £2.16/- and 12 months of £1.7/8.

(c) The KIT OF PARTS to build the DUAL-CHANNEL "3-3" AMPLIFIER and the DUAL-CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIER CONTROL UNIT £21.10.0

(d) The DUAL-CHANNEL "3-3" AMPLIFIER and the DUAL-CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIER CONTROL UNIT BOTH ASSEMBLED and TESTED £25.00 H.P. Terms: Deposit £5, 12 months of £1.6/8.

(e) The KIT OF PARTS to build one "5-10" MAIN CHANNEL and the DUAL-CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIER CONTROL UNIT £21.10.0

(f) ONE "5-10" AMPLIFIER and the DUAL-CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIER both ASSEMBLED and TESTED £25.00 H.P. Terms: Deposit £5, 12 months of £1.6/8.

(g) KIT OF PARTS to build Two "5-10" MAIN AMPLIFIERS (incorporating Parmeko Output Transformers) and the DUAL-CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIER CONTROL UNIT £31.00

(h) TWO "5-10" AMPLIFIERS and the DUAL-CHANNEL PRE-AMPLIFIER CONTROL UNIT BOTH ASSEMBLED & TESTED £36.00 H.P. Terms: Deposit £7.4/-, 12 months £2.12/-. Carriage and Insurance 7/6 extra.

Prices quoted are subject to £1.6/- extra for Partridge Transformer.

and NOW—
WE INTRODUCE

THE MODEL HF/G2P TAPE PRE-AMPLIFIER

THE MODEL HF/G2A TAPE AMPLIFIER

Designed to our usual High Technical Standard. Being based on the very successful Mullard Tape Designs. They incorporate MULLARD VALVES and only HIGH-GRADE COMPONENTS . . . AS A RESULT WE PRESENT

TWO UNITS METICULOUSLY MATCHED TO CORRECTLY OPERATE

THE NEW GARRARD "MAGAZINE" TAPE DECK

Available for sale early in April

The Equipment and Descriptive Leaflets will be available EARLY IN APRIL.

Both Units form an entirely new "Easy-to-handle" presentation, each is completely self-contained with power supply, Loudspeaker (Amplifier HF/G2A only), and all INPUT and OUTPUT sockets being incorporated on the chassis, which itself is constructed to allow for direct attachment to the tape deck (as shown in illustration). Thus the tape deck with the Amplifier (or Pre-amplifier) fixed to it form ONE COMPLETELY SELF-CONTAINED WORKING UNIT which requires only screwing into a Cabinet and connecting to the mains supply.

We OFFER THEM AS FOLLOWS:

(a) Complete Portable TAPE RECORDER (as illustrated)

(b) Complete Portable TAPE PRE-AMPLIFIER (similar to illustration)

(c) HF/G2A AMPLIFIER incorporated on TAPE DECK, Both ASSEMBLED, TESTED and READY FOR USE.

(d) HF/G2P PRE-AMPLIFIER incorporated on TAPE DECK, Both ASSEMBLED and TESTED, READY FOR USE.

(e) THE ASSEMBLED and TESTED HF/G2A AMPLIFIER only.

(f) THE ASSEMBLED and TESTED HF/G2P PRE-AMPLIFIER only.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE IS REALLY EXCELLENT BUT OUR PRICES WILL BE REMARKABLY LOW FOR SUCH HIGH-QUALITY EQUIP. As usual with Garrard products this Tape Deck is a "Easiest-to-handle" Tape Deck, having only two controls and incorporates the new instantaneous tape-loading magazine which makes tape loading as simple as putting on a record.

RECORD PLAYERS

The latest MODELS are in stock. Many at REDUCED PRICES!!! Send S.A.E. for Illustrated Leaflet.

• Latest GARRARD TRANSCRIPTION MOTOR "301" with Stroboscopically marked turntable

• The new GARRARD MODEL 4 HF High-quality Single Record Player fitted with the latest T.P.A.12 Pick-up Arm and G.C.8 Crystal Cartridge

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• B.S.R. MONARCE UAB 4-speed Mixer Auto-changer with Crystal Pick-up

• The COLLARO "CONQUEST" 4-speed Auto-changer, Studio "C" Pick-up

• The new GARRARD Model R.P.501 4-speed Single Record Player Studio Cartridge

• The "GARRARD" UAB 4-speed Single Record Player Studio Pick-up

• The New B.S.R. Model UA12 is in stock.

• GARRARD RC121 4-speed Auto-changer incorporating Crystal Pick-up . . .

H.P. Terms available on all units £8.19.6 and over

Carriage and Insurance on each 5/- extra.

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Stern's "fidelity" TAPE EQUIPMENT

STERN'S - MULLARD TYPE "C" TAPE PRE-AMPLIFIER - ERASE UNIT

INCORPORATING THE NEW FERROX-CUBE POT CORE PUSH-PULL OSCILLATOR and THREE-SPEED TREBLE EQUALISATION. It is the most modern of the latest FERROX-CUBE POT CORE INDUCTOR. PRICES INCLUDING SEPARATE SMALL POWER SUPPLY UNIT:

COMPLETE KIT £14.0.0

ASSEMBLED AND TESTED £17.0.0

Deposits £3/6- and 12 months of £1/4/11. Assembled units only.

ALSO AVAILABLE EXCLUDING POWER SUPPLY UNIT FOR £11.15.0 and £14.10.0 respectively. (Carr. and Ins. 5/- extra.)

Send S.A.E. for leaflet or 2/6 for Complete Assembly Manual. We present this "Hi-Fi" Pre-amplifier strictly to Mullard's specification, etc., incorporating ONLY NEW HIGH-GRADE COMPONENTS and the SPECIFIED NEW MULLARD VALVES. It comprises a COMPLETELY SELF-CONTAINED UNIT, all components and valves being contained in a well-ventilated box-chassis neatly finished in hammered gold with a very attractively engraved PERSPEX FRONT PANEL.

WHEN ORDERING PLEASE STATE MAKE OF TAPE DECK TO BE USED

WE OFFER the following:

- (a) The COLLARO "STUDIO" TAPE DECK and our Mullard Type "C" Pre-amplifier and Power Unit assembled and tested £32.10.0 H.P. Terms: Deposit £2/10/- and 12 months of £2/10/-
- (b) (a) but TYPE "C" Pre-amplifier as complete KIT OF PARTS £29.0.0
- (c) The COLLARO MK. IV TAPE DECK and the MULLARD Type "C" Pre-amplifier and Power Unit assembled and tested £35.0.0 H.P. Deposit £7 and 12 months £2/11.4.
- (d) As in (c) but the Type "C" as complete KIT OF PARTS £37.0.0
- (e) The TRUVOX MK. VI TAPE DECK and the assembled Type "C" Pre-amplifier and Power Unit £40.0.0 H.P. Deposit £8 and 12 months £2/18.8.
- (f) As (e) but the Type "C" as complete KIT OF PARTS £36.10.0
- (g) The BRENNELL MK. V Deck and the assembled Type "C" Pre-amplifier and Power Unit £46.0.0
- (h) As (g) but the Type "C" as complete KIT OF PARTS £43.0.0
- (i) The WEARITE 4A DECK with Type "C" assembled, tested £56.0.0 H.P. Deposit £11/4/- and 12 months £4/2.1.

(Carriage and Insurance on above quotes 10/- extra.)

PLEASE ENCLOSE S.A.E. WITH ALL CORRESPONDENCE.



HOME CONSTRUCTORS

YOU CAN BUILD A COMPLETE TAPE RECORDER

LIKE THIS for £36.0.0

Deposit £7/4/- and 12 monthly payments of £2/12/10 For Constructors with their own Cabinet—WE OFFER

(a) COM "ETFE KIT to build the HF/TR3 Amplifier together with the COLLARO £28.0.0 "STUDIO" DECK

(b) (a) above but with HF/TR3 supplied £31.10.0 ASSEMBLED and TESTED

(c) COMPLETE KIT to build the HF/TR3 together with the NEW TRUVOX £30.15.0 TRANSMITTER" TAPE DECK

(d) As above but with HF/TR3 supplied ASSEMBLED and TESTED £34.10.0

(e) COMPLETE KIT to build the HF/TR3 together with the NEW TRUVOX £36.0.0

MK. VI TAPE DECK

(f) As above but HF/TR3 supplied ASSEMBLED and TESTED £39.10.0

(g) COMPLETE KIT to build the HF/TR3 together with the BRENNELL £41.10.0 MK. V TAPE DECK

(h) As above but HF/TR3 supplied ASSEMBLED and TESTED £45.0.0

(i) THE ASSEMBLED and TESTED HF/TR3 AMPLIFIER with the WEARITE £55.0.0 MODEL 4A DECK incorporates Wearite Head Lift Transformer, etc.

H.P. Terms: Deposit £11, 12 monthly payments of £2/4/-

Carriage and Insurance on each above is 10/- extra.

NOTE: Attractive PORTABLE CASE is available to accommodate the TRUVOX or COLLARO TAPE DECKS and may be offered it together with ROLA/CELESTION 10 x 6 LOUDSPEAKER—ACOS CRYSTAL MICROPHONE and 1.200ft SPOOL E.M.I. TAPE — ALL FOR £9.0.0 Carriage and Insurance 5/- extra.

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Incorporating THREE-SPEED TREBLE EQUALISATION by means of the latest FERROX-CUBE POT CORE INDUCTOR PRICE £12.00

COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS FULLY ASSEMBLED AND TESTED £12.15.0

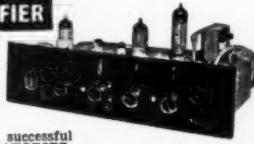
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A very high-quality amplifier based on the very successful

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Please enclose S.A.E. with all enquiries.



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Chapman FM 80 Switched FM
Chapman FM 95 AM/FM Unpowered
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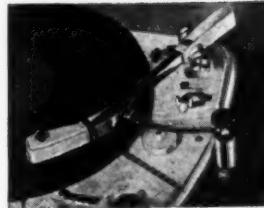
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